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USSIA'S WAR MINISTER

THE LIFE AND WORK OF ADJUTANT-GENERAL VLADIMIR ALEXANDROVITSH SOUKHOMLINOV

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN OF

V. D. DOUMBADZE

EDITED BY A. A. KNAAP

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PREFACE

THE author looks upon the present work as upon a contemporary duty to acquaint Russia with one of the greatest workers standing guard in defence of the country, who, in spite of the prominent position he is occupying, has remained almost unknown to Russian society. The purpose of the following pages is to sketch, to a certain extent, the now already historical figure of our War Minister, V. A. Soukhomlinov, and to acquaint society with those measures which have quietly but persistently been put into practice during the years in which he has been in power.

In the present short biography of this man we shall, in the first instance, call attention to the calmness and self-denial which he manifested in his responsible position, continuing to work and paying no attention to all the snares of his numerous enemies. The moment has now arrived when his activity as a War Minister has become evident. Everybody is now aware of the fact that in all the wars which Russia has waged in the

past, she has never been so well prepared as in her present struggle against Germany. In spite of the fact that Russia has been taken unawares by the well-prepared enemy, in spite of the fact that we had no intention of going to war, the mobilisation has been accomplished quietly and smoothly—and in a very short space of time Russia was ready to such an extent that she not only could take the defensive, but was even able to take the offensive on a large scale.

And yet Germany has been preparing for war with us for a considerable number of years. Methodically, energetically, and diligently the Germans have been preparing from day to day, and from year to year, for two decades at least, for a war with us. All their colossal perfection, from a technical point of view, served this purpose. And the Kaiser went even so far as to exhaust his country with heavy taxes, levied by various right or wrong means, all for the purpose of limiting Russia's growth, or even of reducing her to the position of a secondary Power. In the face of such facts, the enormous and manifold organising military work in Russia, planned and spread out over many years and suddenly interrupted in the middle of its development, should apparently have led to confusion,

disorder, and disorganisation. Such, however, has not been the case, and no unforeseen events could possibly have caught Russia napping; for all the reforms had been introduced with such carefulness that at any moment, as, indeed, facts have now proved, Russia was able to make use and avail herself of all that had actually been done and was ready. Such a perfection, even of the most passing phases in military preparations, bears proof not only of the vast creative power, but also of the great administrative talent of the man who did his work wholeheartedly, and never for a moment allowed the control of the military organisation to pass from his own hands.

In the first days following the declaration of war, Russia was seized by a vague fear—a fear which could easily have changed into panic had there arisen any difficulties in our military organisation or had any mistakes become evident. The country was anxious to know how far we were prepared. This fear, however, as soon as the Government had made known to the country what measures it was taking, soon changed into a firm conviction that everything was in perfect order in Russia, and that we need not at all be afraid of any disorganisation. It soon became clear to every one that those days

when Russia was great and rich but suffered from an absence of order and organisation, were days of a distant past. This firm conviction and absolute faith in the ultimate victory became at once general: took hold of the entire Russian army, and was shared by all those who were suddenly called to arms. The world thus witnessed a united Russia, a great country united by indissoluble bonds with her great and fearless army, firmly believing in victory.

The great national spirit manifested itself in an imposing manner, and nobody experienced any feeling of pity for our great Empire, which, unable to develop its strength, would have to bear the brunt of irony and reproach, as had unfortunately been the case in a previous war, an unhappy war for Russia. Now, everybody felt and was sure that everything that could possibly have been done had been done, and that Russia would avail herself in a careful and firm manner of all the resources at her disposal. And for this first victory, a spiritual victory, we are indebted to the man who, in accordance with the instructions he had received from his sovereign, paid no heed to the attacks of his enemies and persistently continued the responsible task entrusted to him.

The national spirit of the Russian nation

received a further stimulus from the conviction that the War Minister, cognisant of his own strength, never feared or was jealous of talented collaborators, but, on the contrary, did his best always to surround himself with clever and conscientious co-workers. The first days of the present campaign convinced everybody that the commanding staff consisted of talented and competent men. It became at once evident that the high power concentrated in the person of the War Minister had by no means crushed the individuality and creative power of the various military commandments, but, on the contrary, had fostered in them a spirit of independence and self-confidence which are absolutely indispensable in a war of such gigantic proportions as is the present European struggle, and which will, therefore, undoubtedly lead to victory.

Our aim will now be to show and explain how such a strong personality as that of Soukhomlinov could develop itself in our social life. In order to acquaint the reader a little more closely with him, the author considers it necessary to quote as frequently as possible the ideas and views of the War Minister from the latter's numerous writings, which are only known to a special circle of military readers.

V D. Doumbadze.

RUSSIA'S WAR MINISTER

CHAPTER I

SOUKHOMLINOV'S MILITARY TRAINING

VLADIMIR ALEXANDROVITSH SOUKHOMLINOV was born in 1848 and is descended from an old, noble family. At the age of thirteen, in 1861, he entered the Alexandrovsky-Brestsky corps of cadets. Two years later he was transferred to the first corps of cadets, and in 1865, at the age of seventeen, he was already a *yunker* in the Nicholas School of Cavalry. At the age of nineteen, i.e. in 1867, he became cornet in the regiment of Life Guards of the Tsar, where his career as horseman began.

When he was twenty-three, in 1871, Soukhomlinov was in the Nicholas Academy of the General Staff, which he left at the age of twenty-six with the rank of Staff Captain of cavalry, and was attached to the General Staff of the Guards in the military district of Petrograd. In the same year he was appointed senior adju-

tant of the staff of the 1st division of the Cavalry Guards.

In 1876 he was again transferred into the cuirassier Life Guards of His Majesty, and commanded a squadron, and the following year he was attached to the active army which was manœuvring against the Turks on the Danube. The War of Liberation gave Soukhomlinov an opportunity to show his brilliant military qualities. During the campaign he was at the disposal of the Commander-in-Chief and was attached to the staff of the 1st Army Corps. In recognition of his excellent services he was appointed Sub-Colonel and received a number of military distinctions. For the taking of the Troyan mountain summit he received the cross of St. George, 4th class; for reconnoitring the Plevna fortresses, a golden sword; for his passage over the Balkans he received the order (medal) of St. Stanislaus, 2nd class; whilst for the battle of Philippopolis he had the cross of St. Anne, 2nd class. For taking the town of Humurdjin he had the order of St. Vladimir, 4th class, surmounted by swords and the ribbon.

After the Russo-Turkish war, and until the year 1884, Vladimir Alexandrovitsh Soukhomlinov occupied the post of Administrator of the Nicholas Academy of

the General Staff, when this establishment was being enlarged. In 1884 he commanded the 6th regiment of His Majesty's Pavlograd Life Dragoons. On account of his qualities and competence as a horseman, Soukhomlinov was appointed in 1886, at the age of thirty-eight, to the high post of Governor of the cavalry school of officers. In 1890 he was made a Major-General, and in 1897 was appointed Commanding General of the 10th Cavalry Division. In 1898 he was made a Lieutenant-General, and in 1899 was appointed Chief of the Staff of the Kiev military district under Adjutant-General M. F. Dragomirov. The latter distinguished officer highly esteemed Soukhomlinov, both for his talent and for his knowledge, and seeing in him his possible successor, appointed him in 1902 as his assistant, commanding the armies of the Kiev military districts. In 1904, by permission, Dragomirov retired from service, and Soukhomlinov was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the armies of the Kiev military district, and made Governor-General of the military zone of Kiev, Volhynia, and Podolia. In this high and responsible post, requiring wide administrative qualities, tact, and vast knowledge in various spheres of activity, Vladimir Alexandrovitsh Soukhomlinov gave ample

proof of his ability and his absolute competence.

Whilst in command of the Kiev military district, he proved himself a splendid organiser and showed himself well versed in military matters. Then already, foreseeing a desperate struggle with Germany, he began to prepare the armies under his command for the ensuing war. He was generally engaged upon some tour of inspection, visiting the military districts entrusted to him. Apart from the technical military preparations, Soukhomlinov, following in the footsteps of Dragomirov, endeavoured to inculcate the army with a spirit of courage and bravery. As Governor-General, moreover, he showed an admirable tact and a deep knowledge of the requirements of the region. He is a strict adherer to severe lawfulness, and yet he dislikes excessive formality, a fact which gained him the love and esteem of the population of the provinces he governed. V. A. Soukhomlinov's activity, and his qualities and ability, were soon judged in accordance with their merit, with the result that in 1909 he was appointed War Minister. It was then that his tremendous work in reorganising the Russian army began.

Parallel with his military and administrative activities, V. A. Soukhomlinov

was also busy in teaching and literary domains. His pedagogical activity began when he was twenty-six and occupied the post of teacher of tactics in the Nicholas School of Cavalry, a post which he held for ten years, until 1884. For six years again, i.e. from 1878 to 1884, he taught in the corps of pages of His Majesty, and in 1883 and 1884 he was on the teaching staff of the Michael School of Artillery. Again, from 1878 to 1884, and from 1886 to 1897, he superintended the practical, tactical work and a supplementary course of instruction in the military academy of the General Staff. Being an efficient tactician, V. A. Soukhomlinov was appointed instructor of Their Imperial Highnesses, the Grand Dukes Peter Nicholaevitsh and George and Serge Mikhailovitsh. His pedagogical activity in the military schools enabled him to acquaint himself personally with the state of the Russian army and its commanding officers at that time, and to judge of the talents and ability of several individual superior officers. Of this knowledge Soukhomlinov made good use when he was at last appointed to the high post he at present occupies, that of head of Russia's military affairs. Being by no means self-interested and jealous, but having only the welfare of the Empire in view, Vladimir Alexandrovitsh Souk-

homlinov gave individual merit its proper due.

The author cannot help drawing a parallel between such an attitude and that noticed in the high commandant of the German army, where talent and military ability, instead of being useful to them, only harmed those who had the misfortune to possess such qualities. In the German army all talent and independent thought were jealously kept in the background. Only one personality ruled over all. Whilst, therefore, the present war shows us that Germany only possesses dull and mechanical executors of the will of the head, Russia, on the contrary, can boast of a whole row of talented commanding officers, possessing a broad outlook and initiative, enabling them to realise the general plan of operations. It has been generally admitted that not only the commanding staffs, but also the subaltern officers, have thoroughly grasped the greatness of the task—and even the enemy is compelled to admit that every Russian soldier represents not a pawn upon the military chessboard but a conscious fighting unit.

If, in former times, when armies were comparatively small, discipline and a blind obedience and carrying out of the instructions of the commander played the

principal rôle, in the present war, in view of the gigantic military operations, personal initiative and understanding of his task by every soldier will decide the issue. For the last-named quality the Russian army is indebted to its War Minister, who himself fostered the freedom of initiative and of creation among his immediate subordinates and introduced that spirit into the organism of the entire Russian army. Only a man with a wide outlook and vast knowledge, and one possessing administrative talents, could introduce such a change in the army in a comparatively short space of time.

CHAPTER II

THE DAILY PROGRAMME

His affability, his simplicity of manner, the absolute accessibility of the Minister, coupled with a just and honest uprightness and truthfulness, are well known to the army. Modest, and an enemy of all pomp in daily life, V. A. Soukhomlinov becomes, as it were, a different man when he is on horseback in front of the army. His fine attitude on horseback, his warrior-like aspect, inspire the army with faith in their leader and with confidence in their own powers.

Vladimir Alexandrovitsh, like the Viceroy of the Caucasus, Count Ilarion Ivanovitsh Vorontzov-Dashnov, never took any special care to protect his own personality. During the troubles in 1905, Count Ilarion was seen in the most obscure streets of Tiflis without an escort, and V. A. Soukhomlinov, when he was Governor-General of the Kiev, Volhynia and Podolia district, used to walk fearlessly through the streets of Kiev. This even led to an attack and a criticism in

the Press. It is satisfactory, however, to all those to whom the greatness and strength of their native land is dear, to see such Imperial workers, convinced of their own uprightness of character and despising the possible dangers which might threaten them on account of their very uprightness and sincere, honest work. With a deep feeling of gratitude we look up to such great representatives of Russian Imperial life, whilst we turn with disgust from the cowards who constantly hide behind other people's backs. Here we have a firm, moral strength—there cowards lacking in self-confidence, petty and pusillanimous. The former represent the greatness and the strength of the Empire, the latter the unnecessary ballast, and even a pernicious drag. And the entire population knows how to value both. The love, devotion, and admiration which the Caucasus expressed to its Viceroy, the deferential consideration which one feels for the personality of V. A. Soukhomlinov, are the best proofs of the appreciation of their work and their importance in the Empire. Such men naturally have many enemies and enviers who are anxious to calumniate and to throw mud at them. His Imperial Majesty, however, never listens to envious whispers. And thus these Imperial

workers occupy honourable, responsible positions, and in spite of all intrigues their work is constantly encouraged by the goodwill and favour of their monarch.

Anxious to acquaint himself personally with the requirements of the army, Vladimir Alexandrovitsh often travels all over Russia. These journeys, however, are neither punitive expeditions nor continuous parades.

As a good master, V. A. Soukhomlinov does his best to penetrate the real situation of the army, to help where it is necessary, to correct defects and to fill up the gaps. In every respect the Minister manifests his knowledge and wide experience, and no one can escape his experienced, vigilant eye. These unexpected journeys compel the army to be always on the alert and ready to receive the illustrious guest.

Being an enemy of all chancellery routine, the Minister gives at once his personal decision on all questions arising in the localities he is visiting, thus avoiding lengthy correspondence with Petrograd. The personal affability of the Minister often adjusts and settles friction, and thus furthers to a great extent the productiveness of the work. In every question the Minister at once grasps the essential points, eliminating all that is superfluous. Work, therefore, with him

proceeds very quickly, and sittings under his chairmanship never last very long.

Vladimir Alexandrovitsh is a very hard worker, and his daily programme is as follows : He rises at 7 o'clock, and at once goes into his study to look over his correspondence. At 9 o'clock he dresses, drinks a glass of milk, and if there is no urgent work goes out for half an hour's walk. From 10 to 1, and from 2 to 5, he is busy with reports, audiences, sittings in the Imperial Duma, in the Imperial Council, in the Cabinet of Ministers, in the Military Council, or with work in his own study. He lunches at 2 o'clock—a function which takes him only a few minutes. His free time, from 5 to 7.30, Vladimir Alexandrovitsh consecrates to the perusal of the written reports sent to him from various departments, the details of which he examines minutely and carefully. At 8 o'clock he dines, and from half-past 8 to 9 or 10 he looks through the reports which he daily submits to His Imperial Majesty for perusal.

Twice weekly the Minister personally reports to His Majesty. Work is continued until 11 o'clock in the evening, or even later. Thus Vladimir Alexandrovitsh's entire day is a busy one. He works with ardour, being heart and soul

in his duties. He is interested in every clever innovation, and never gives up until he has realised it. In his private life V. A. Soukhomlinov is exceedingly simple. His dinner on weekdays consists of two courses, a third being added only on holidays. He neither drinks wine nor does he smoke.

A number of interesting stories about Vladimir Alexandrovitsh are afloat both in Russia and in France. We shall quote two, referring to his journey to France.

Once he was taking a walk in the neighbourhood of Nice when he came across a group of French soldiers who were busy cording up some packages. Interesting himself in their work, the War Minister walked up to the soldiers and began to converse with them. The soldiers, unaware of the identity of their interlocutor, told him that these packages were destined for the neighbouring fort, and that they themselves formed the garrison of the fort. At this moment a non-commissioned officer approached, and, seeing the soldiers conversing with a stranger, upbraided them for doing so and for confidentially chatting with him.

"He might be a spy," muttered the non-commissioned officer. "Who are you, anyhow?" he asked General Soukhomlinov.

"I am a Russian," replied the latter, and produced a handful of Russian coins in corroboration of his statement.

"Bah!" said the Frenchman, "cannot a spy procure Russian money?"

"I am a Russian general."

"Really!" drawled out the French non-commissioned officer.

"To tell you the truth, I am the Russian War Minister."

The soldier retreated a few steps and saluted; his example being followed by his men.

It was also in the neighbourhood of Nice, in a little village hidden away among the hills, the village of Gorbio, where the following occurred. General Soukhomlinov, accompanied by his wife, entered a modest inn. Although the War Winister was travelling incognito, the landlady learned from the chauffeur who the illustrious guests were who had come to slake their thirst at her modest inn. Having brought in what was required, she then silently sat down to an old piano, and suddenly the sounds of the Russian national hymn reached Soukhomlinov's ears. One can easily imagine the Minister's astonishment.

Having listened with uncovered head to the Russian hymn, V. A. Soukhomlinov in his turn sat down to the piano and

played the Marseillaise, to the great delight of all present.

These stories prove how popular Vladimir Alexandrovitsh is in France, not only in the higher military spheres but also among the lower strata of the population.

Germany, on the contrary, does not love him, seeing in him a somewhat too dangerous foe.

CHAPTER III

THE STORY OF "MOUSHKA"

THE faithful friend of Vladimir Alexandrovitsh is his wife, Ekaterina Victoroona Soukhomlinov. At the present exceptional moment, when a number of urgent and keenly felt needs must at once be satisfied, Madame Soukhomlinov has organised the work which consists in looking after the wounded and in supplying the brave defenders of the country with all that they require. It is a work which the most ideal military organisations and commissariats can never accomplish to perfection. Madame Soukhomlinov has consecrated all her time and all her ability to this great work.

The following episode of the present war, which I have borrowed from the *Gazette de la Bourse* and have verified, well characterises the Minister and his wife as two simple, sensitive people.

A shell from a heavy German gun exploded in front of the Russian bombardier, Fedov Netshaev. The terrible explosion stunned the soldier, and when he regained

consciousness he was feeling pain all over his body. Blood was streaming from several wounds he had received. A number of splinters had penetrated into his body, whilst the bigger ones had lodged themselves under his right ear, in his right shoulder and his right leg. When the ambulanciers approached, his first question was: "Where is Moushka? Has she been wounded?"

A little white dog with red spots was jumping round the stretcher, endeavouring to lick the hands of the wounded soldier.

"As soon as I saw her, I felt easier," said the soldier in telling the story. "I do not remember whither they carried me. When they dressed my wounds I suffered greatly. I then awoke in the hospital train. Now, I thought, now I shall never see Moushka again. But the little beggar was there. She had crept under the bed, and as soon as the train left the station, she came out, jumped up, laid down at my feet and fell asleep; she even snored, for she was very tired. The good Sister of Mercy allowed Moushka to remain in the compartment.

"When I joined the regiment I found Moushka there. I do not know where she came from, but she is such a good little dog, and I have grown to like her. She,

too, never left me, accompanied me everywhere. When we used to make ourselves ready for a march, Moushka, like a man, understood everything, and went in advance, afraid lest she might be left behind in the barracks.

"We have been with her in eight battles. God preserved us. Moushka was always running about round the batteries, barking, and had grown quite accustomed to the shells, so that she did not even tremble.

"In the eighth battle I was knocked down. I did not notice the German shell, and the explosion was so terrific that I lost consciousness. In the train only I felt a little easier. And Moushka understood everything very well; she knew that I was rather queer, and she licked my hands.

"They brought me to Petrograd. At the station, when they carried me out, Moushka was near me, barking and not allowing anybody to approach me. A Sister of Mercy, such a tall, beautiful lady, came up. I said to her: 'My dear Sister, what will become of the dog?'

"She replied: 'How do you feel yourself?'

"Said I: 'Never mind me, but what about the dog? She will be lost in this large city.'

"And suddenly the Sister of Mercy addressed me as follows:

"'Do you mind if your little dog is looked after in the house of the War Minister?' I was fairly surprised to hear such words.

"'What are you thinking of, my Sister?' I said; 'in the house of the War Minister! This is impossible.'

"'I am the wife of the War Minister,' replied the tall lady, 'and I shall obtain my husband's permission to look after your dog until you get better.'

"She is a good lady; may God preserve her. I began to cry when I heard that she had taken pity on Moushka.

"'But I am afraid she will give you trouble,' I said, and yet I was so happy that I did not feel my own pain.

"'Never mind,' said the lady; 'she is a nice little dog, and it will give me pleasure to look after her, and I shall bring her to the hospital to see you.' I felt quite at ease now; Moushka was saved; she would be all right under such good care.

"They brought me to the hospital, examined my wounds, dressed them. I suffered greatly, but I consoled myself, thinking that I shall soon be better and once more be on the march with Moushka by my side.

"On Sunday, when I had just finished my dinner, there entered the General, accompanied by the tall Sister of Mercy who had met me at the station. 'This must be the War Minister himself,' I thought; and I had scarcely dragged out my sound hand to salute when I heard Moushka's bark. A man was holding her by her collar which I had bought her myself, whilst she was barking furiously and tearing away from him.

"The wife of the War Minister ordered the man to let Moushka go, and the dog at once jumped up to me and began to lick my hand. I could see in her eyes that she was very glad.

"The War Minister is so good, I cannot tell. He asked me about everything: about the service, how I had been wounded, and so on.

"'Do not trouble about me, Your Excellency. I should like to get out as quickly as possible and be at the front once more. I thank you from my heart for Moushka; I shall never forget it.'

"'Thank you for your service,' said the War Minister. 'I see you have a good heart, if you take such care of animals.'

"'Moushka has grown quite fat, and will no doubt refuse to come to the front now; she has been spoilt, Your Excellency.'

"The wife of the War Minister told me everything in detail. She brought Moushka home, but the dog was barking at everybody, even at the War Minister. At last they thought of calling in a soldier, and she took to him at once, for he was a familiar figure to her. She was fed, and then fell asleep in a corner.

"'Now she is all right, has grown accustomed; but she is constantly running about the rooms looking for somebody; of course she is seeking you.'

"'She has grown accustomed to me,' I said; 'we have been together for two years, even in campaigns. The Sister of Mercy in the hospital train told me that Moushka had followed my traces from the front for fifteen versts, and as soon as she came to the train she jumped into it. I wonder how she managed to pass unnoticed.'

"The War Minister shook my hand, told me to get better, and the lady promised to bring Moushka once more to see me.

"May God grant them health! They understand the soul of the soldier. I do not care for myself, but I am very happy as far as Moushka is concerned."

I could not help quoting the story in its entirety, for this charming, artless, and truthful tale of a simple Russian soldier

reflects the great country, the great soul of the nation, that goodness and sincerity, that simplicity of character which constitute the power and strength of Great Russia. A similar incident could never have occurred in Germany. It is this strength of Russia which is now pulling down Germany.

CHAPTER IV

SOUKHOMLINOV AS AN AUTHOR

Vladimir Alexandrovitsh Soukhomlinov's literary activity is vast and manifold. He writes under his own name as well as under the pseudonyms of " Ostap Bondarenko " and " Shpora " (Spur). This literary activity extends to many fields, although it necessarily assumes a specific character. The characteristic features of V. A. Soukhomlinov's literary productions are his thoughtfulness and deep knowledge of his subject, his absolute and exclusive honesty and exactitude, an exactitude which often reaches a high degree of fastidiousness where other authors are concerned. In view of his vast erudition and deep knowledge of his subject and the questions at issue, and the personal conclusions he draws, Vladimir Alexandrovitsh Soukhomlinov seems almost afraid to omit the quotations from those authors who have discussed the same question and expressed similar views to his own, even if with less thoroughness and authority. Therefore, while expressing his own views,

he often takes recourse to quotations from the works of other authors, giving, as it were, chapter and verse, and then completing the ideas of the author with his own views, developing the original idea so that it becomes lucid and assumes quite a different and more profound aspect.

This careful and conscientious attitude as far as other authors are concerned, shows the high moral qualities of Soukhomlinov, and gives the key to the understanding of his success in realising his plans. His collaborators and subordinates are evidently never afraid of seeing their own ideas meeting with little appreciation, or being, as it were, merged into the collective activity, and thus of receiving no remuneration for their individual respective labours. On the contrary, every one is sure of meeting with the appreciation his merit deserves.

Only under such conditions could the productive, friendly, and collective work be continued, beginning above and finishing among the smallest subalterns and the lower ranks. Every one is anxious, as it has now become evident, to add his personal share of knowledge and his abilities to the general work. The author, furthermore, cannot help drawing attention to that honesty by which the literary productions of Soukhomlinov are per-

meated. This honesty speaks of a strong, sincere personality, sure of its own power. Being himself a talented man, Soukhomlinov never hesitates to express his appreciation of everything that denotes talent and independence of thought. Like a red thread this attitude can be traced through all his works.

"I admire and esteem talented people," writes Soukhomlinov.

"Believe me, the best things have not been the result of the deliberations of committees, but of specially gifted individuals."

"A man can find in himself more energy and means of action than in any outward assistance."

With particular love V. A. Soukhomlinov often dwells upon the great historical figures. His lines breathe deep feeling and penetration when he is writing about the Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholaevitsh the elder. Tersely, and yet picturesquely and in a well-thought-out manner, Denis Davydov expresses his views about Napoleon in Vladimir Alexandrovitsh's stories entitled *On the Great Road of Smolensk.*

Peter the Great, Frederick II, Charles XII, Zeydlitz, Murat, and the well-known hero in the national war, Denis Davydov, are V. A. Soukhomlinov's favourite

heroes. Through the mouth of Denis Davydov, Soukhomlinov often expresses his own innermost thoughts. His biography of Murat is a comparatively long study. In view of his talents, the author (Soukhomlinov) forgives Murat his ambition, his lack of balance, and his other faults. Only talented people are able, according to Vladimir Alexandrovitsh, to produce sound systems of life or do any real work. Therefore Soukhomlinov cannot stand presumptuous, authoritative incapacity and lack of talent.

In the course of his critical sketches he often makes fun, almost mercilessly, of the *savants en chambre*, and he styles them the scholars of the *tabouret*, who imagine themselves to be great reformers and propagators of important ideas.

Discussing the work of such a learned theoretical horseman he writes :

" In order to gain confidence, these gentlemen describe themselves and enumerate the catalogue of their respective works. And how these men are in love with the cavalry, one can only adequately describe in verse. They adore the horse, naturally a good one, love the field tremendously, and reprimand, for all they are worth, what is called in the cavalry the *tabouret*. They form the groundwork of a learned but wicked service which

may be described as follows: From the horse to the pen and from the pen to the horse.

"It is their business to contradict and discuss Charles XII, Peter I, and Frederick II, proving that those heroes never understood horsemanship, and so on."

Making fun of these scholars V. A. Soukhomlinov quotes, as an example of their work, the following passage:

"Bohemia, month of July. Heat of 30° R. in the shade. The rivers are dry, there is no water in the wells, the means of communication have been destroyed, the inhabitants are rushing away, endeavouring to reach the mountain peaks, the enemy is expected from all sides. His scouts and chasseurs have been seen. (Here follows a list of 120 villages.) His chief army is there, his second somewhere else. Our army and detachments are at another place. The Commander-in-Chief of the enemy's forces is courageous, resolute, energetic, and cheerful; our commander is morose, taciturn, and incredibly wary. He drinks not only water, but also vodka. He is suffering from a cold in the head. A detachment of 21,000 men with forty-eight guns is supposed to subdue the entire region."

V. A. Soukhomlinov, however, does not deny the merit and importance of serious,

judicious, and talented theorists. But if incapacity is coupled with impudence, then Vladimir Alexandrovitsh almost preaches a campaign against them. And in order to safeguard the work of decent people, we are obliged to fight against the former. Let every one add his share, adequate to his strength, to this struggle, and soon nimble, impudent incapacity will have been made harmless.

Soukhomlinov was personally compelled to carry on such a campaign against very influential individuals and groups. Quietly, however, and undisturbed he went on his way towards the goal he had set himself. This confidence in his own righteousness was appreciated in high quarters, as it well deserved to be, and the intrigues of the enemy were frustrated. As long as the world exists, the struggle between parties, groups, individuals, personal interest, and intrigues will also exist. And in such cases everybody always imagines that right is on his side. Thus in this case, too, everything was set on foot at one time to oust Soukhomlinov from power. But the campaign failed. The Emperor knew Soukhomlinov and continued to honour him with his confidence. The arrow which was to strike Soukhomlinov hurt, by ricochet, those who had sent it.

CHAPTER V

THE SACREDNESS OF BATTLE

Apart from perseverance in carrying out a plan once conceived, V. A. Soukhomlinov also recommends energy, decision, and brisk activity.

"You should know that the commander who only defends himself loses the battle, whilst he who attacks is victorious, because he is the master of his intentions, carries out his own idea, and is not compelled to deal with the idea of another."

Looking upon moral power as one of the prime motive forces of life, Vladimir Alexandrovitsh endeavours to implant such a sentiment in the Russian army. In his opinion, an army should be brought up in the spirit of a serious understanding of its task.

This idea is expressed in the story where Denis Davydov relates his first encounter on the field—and which Vladimir Alexandrovitsh describes as follows:

"I galloped up to the Cossacks who were shooting at the scouts of the enemy. One of the nearest, clad in a blue mantle

and a bearskin cap, appeared to be an officer. I would fain have seized him and made him prisoner, but the Cossacks did not agree to it. I became excited, my heart pulsated very fast, and like a madman I spurred my horse and, approaching the officer, fired a pistol-shot at him. Carried away by an incomprehensible hatred, God only knows why, against this man, who was evidently, just like myself, only doing his duty and obeying the dictates of his honour and service, I came a little nearer, raised my sabre, and began to abuse the man in French. I called upon him to step out of the lines and fight me single-handed. He replied in the same vein.

"I added a few insults in Russian to those I had already hurled at him in French.

"At that moment a Cossack sergeant galloped up to me and said:

"'Why are you insulting the man, Your Honour? It is a sin. A battle is a sacred matter, and to insult people on the battlefield is as sinful as in church. God will punish you, you will perish, and we with you. Go back to where you came from.'"

Thus V. A. Soukhomlinov, believing in the sacredness of his duty, and comparing battle to divine service, considers right

only that spirit of education which teaches the army to look upon the fight against the enemy as a sacred matter. In his opinion, it is only under such conditions that an invincible army becomes possible. Being himself generous and magnanimous by nature, Vladimir Alexandrovitsh Soukhomlinov likes to see his armies acting magnanimously. He recommends them to act thus and humanely towards the vanquished foe.

With a great deal of feeling he relates the story of Denis Davydov about the Lieutenant Serugue:

"The brother of Davydov, a young lieutenant of twenty in the regiment of the Horse Guards, who was wounded at Austerlitz, was treated kindly by his host, the Lieutenant Serugue, who had made him prisoner. Serugue was a nephew of the Cabinet Minister, Marot.

"A few years later Davydov learned that this very officer was a prisoner of the Russians. Davydov met him in Koenigsberg dying of his wounds. Serugue was being well looked after, but he was yearning for his Grenadiers, clad in their bearskin caps. Denis Davydov mentioned the matter to the authorities, and two Grenadier prisoners were allowed to remain with the officer, who died in their arms. At the funeral the two Grenadiers and the young

Russian officer followed the coffin. Davydov thus paid the last debt for his brother."

Altogether, Denis Davydov, on account of his chivalrous character, appears to be the favourite type of V. A. Soukhomlinov, whilst one can notice the feeling of pity his lines are breathing when he is describing the cruelty of another character or type, a certain Figner, a cruelty which throws a black shadow upon the otherwise splendid reputation of the brilliant hero of the national war. Original is the conversation between Figner and Denis Davydov which Soukhomlinov reproduces. To Figner's request to hand over the prisoners to the young Cossacks, who in his (Figner's) opinion had not yet been incited, Davydov replies:

"Do not undeceive me, Alexander Samoilovitsh; let me continue to think that heroism is the soul of your brilliant actions and that without it they are dead and fruitless. As a Russian, I should have wished that we had more splendid but also magnanimous warriors." And immediately after having uttered these words Denis Davydov doubled the guards watching the prisoners, for fear that Figner might steal them. This magnanimity towards the vanquished enemy displayed by V. A. Soukhomlinov's favour-

ite hero assumes the character of an almost chivalrous delicacy of feeling.

"The French Colonel, Getalze, marching upon the broad road of Smolensk, suddenly felt a desire to hunt, and taking up his gun he left his soldiers behind. He succeeded in shooting down a woodcock, and, carried away by the pleasure of the hunt, he fell into the hands of the Cossacks, commanded by Denis Davydov. The Cossacks, by way of making fun of the French prisoner, placed the woodcock upon a pole and began in turn to aim at the bird, taken away from Getalze, with the latter's own gun. The Colonel almost cried at his own negligence, and could not look on with equanimity at the mockery. Davydov noticed this, and at once put a stop to the fun, which, in his opinion, was out of place, directed as it was against an enemy made prisoner."

On another occasion Lieutenant Tilling told Davydov that among his jewellery which the Cossacks had deprived him of, was a golden ring, a souvenir from a beloved woman. Denis Davydov at once gave orders that the ring should be returned to him even from the very bottom of the sea. The ring was found, and together with a letter Davydov sent it on after the transport of prisoners among whom was Tilling. In his letter the

Russian officer wrote: "Dear Sir, take back the object which you value so highly. May it not only remind you of the beloved person, but also prove to you that courage and misfortune are esteemed in Russia as they are in other countries."

These chivalrous traits V. A. Soukhomlinov describes with evident pleasure, because chivalry is part of his nature, as he has proved before the whole of Russia and the entire civilised world. Moreover, being of a frank, open, and straight nature, Vladimir Alexandrovitsh hates flattery. "Flattery," he says in the words of Bacon, "is the worst meanness of all." The Russian soldier is, of course, by nature magnanimous and full of pity for the vanquished enemy, and these qualities could not but freely develop themselves, encouraged as they are by such a high personality as that of the War Minister.

Highly appreciating as he does individual initiative and creative power, Vladimir Alexandrovitsh gives its due to tradition. Soukhomlinov's careful attitude towards tradition is shown in his study of ancient documents. In his letters addressed to his nephew, "Ostap Bondarenko" writes: "I shall acquaint you with that which you young people usually hold in little esteem and of which, I feel sure, many of your comrades have no idea

whatever." A little farther on he says that the brilliant past of the Russian army ought to produce brilliant examples and glorious rules. He learns these rules with evident pleasure and brings them, as it were, to life again. In his opinion, only he who has not broken off his connection with the past stands upon firm ground and may fearlessly face the future. Soukhomlinov is not a supporter of the new simply on account of its being new and contemporary. "You look how they worked in the past. Can you compare it to the learnedly obscure present-day descriptions in which the author, imagining himself to be dwelling in the domains of psychology, is in reality only furnishing material for the psychiatrist and specialist in mental aberration?"

"Ostap Bondarenko" is highly pleased with the definition of soldier as it was given in 1835:

"The word soldier is a famous common appellation, for both the greatest general and the humblest private are soldiers.

"Every loyal subject of the Emperor may be called a soldier, every one upon whose mighty shoulders lies the sweet duty of defending the holy faith, the Imperial throne, and the native land, to defeat the foreign foe and to maintain within the boundaries of the realm general

peace and lawful order. A bad son of the Church can never be a good son of the Empire; and therefore a good soldier should strengthen himself in the Word of God, with all his heart and soul, with all his thoughts and intentions; a good soldier should be well versed in the holy Christian faith and in the words of the Imperial Code of laws.

"Very little is required of him who is anxious to become a good soldier. Love God, the Emperor, and your Country. Obey blindly the instructions of your superiors. Be courageous and fearless on the battlefield. Accomplish all the duties imposed upon you by the service without a murmur, in a spirit of humility and cheerfulness—and submit to all the hardships, which are very often unavoidable, in a spirit of Christian submission and resignation. Sanction all your merits by an oath which you should guard as the apple of your eye. An oath is a solemn promise given personally to God. He who is faithful to a sacred oath and sacrifices his life upon the battlefield is sure of entering the kingdom of heaven, whilst he who returns alive from the battle is favoured by the Tsar. God is with the brave and does not refuse them anything, whilst the coward and the traitor He punishes severely. There is no mercy for

the mean deserter, neither in this world nor on the day of the last judgment."

V. A. Soukhomlinov is delighted with this simple and clear definition.

Very frequently Vladimir Alexandrovitsh furnishes valuable historical information which sheds a light upon the question at issue. Thus, talking about the schemers who continually bother the Ministers, "Ostap Bondarenko" writes as follows: "I rejoice at your perspicacity, your power to distinguish between work and nonsense, idle stories, as it were. It is, however, wrong of you to imagine that these schemers did not exist before. They did, just as now. Such schemers have always existed, and the most absurd of their plans, dear friend, have often been attempted to be realised. What better example do you want than the construction of the Tower of Babel? There is no lack of such Babylonians even in our day, only, thanks unto God, the matter never comes to a real construction.

"You evidently seem to wish for some effect such, for instance, as is described in the *Memoirs of Zhelaboujsky* (1682–1709):

"'1695. The 30th of April. On that day a peasant suddenly shouted for the guard and was taken to the Court of the Strelitzy, where he was examined. He

declared that if he could make wings for himself he could fly like a crane. And in accordance with the instructions of the great Princes, he was allowed to make such wings, which he prepared of mica, and they cost the princely treasury eighteen roubles.

"'The *boyard* * Prince Ivan Borissovitsh Troekonrov, the chief of the Strelitzy Court, came out with his friends and comrades and many others to witness the performance. The peasant crossed himself and attempted to fly, but, of course, he could not; then he said that his wings were too heavy; if he could have wings made of the skin of a sheep or a goat he could certainly fly. The *boyard* was very vexed, but he gave orders that new wings should be made for the peasant, which wings cost five roubles. The peasant again failed to fly, for which inability he was severely punished. He was stripped of his shirt, beaten with sticks, and was then sold so as to restitute the money spent upon his project.'

"It seems to me that you, too, my dear friend, are yearning for such sticks. Leave it, my dear friend; it is not worth it. With pleasure I always recall in this

* Boyar = An order of the old Russian aristocracy holding the chief military and civil offices prior to the reforms of Peter the Great.

connection the decision of the Emperor Alexander I.

"One day a certain Torgovanov, having conceived some mad Babylonian schemes, made the suggestion of piercing a tunnel under the Neva. He placed his interesting scheme before the Emperor Alexander I. The latter wrote on the margin the following order: 'Torgovanov is to receive 200 roubles, but must promise in writing never again to occupy himself with any schemes, but to go about such business as his circumstances permit.'"

CHAPTER VI

CAVALRY

BEING himself a cavalryman, and having spent a number of years in the cavalry, V. A. Soukhomlinov consecrates a number of his works to the exposition of cavalry. Almost all his smaller stories and the greater number of his articles treat of this question.

In order to form an adequate idea of the attention which Vladimir Alexandrovitsh devoted to the question of cavalry, it will be sufficient to give a brief enumeration of all his articles and sketches on this subject:

"A word about cavalry," "Education and management of cavalry," "Cavalry *fin de siècle*," "Shooting from horseback," "The horse Osman-Pasha," "A Bosnian horse," "Horsemanship in France," "Remarks about cavalry in Austria, France, and Germany," "The importance of the breeders of thoroughbred horses,' "'The thoroughbred on the march and in the lines," "The American battle-horse," "Our horses of the line in the campaigns

of 1877–1878," "The German horses of the front in the campaigns of 1870–71," "Feeding as a means to preserve the horse material," "Concerning the race of the centurion Kenige," "About the remounting of the French cavalry," "A competition race between Berlin and Vienna," "About races," "The race Beekhatsh-Saraevo," "The winter race of the officers of the cavalry of the Guards," "A competition race over 100 versts," "A few words about the 100 versts race near Warsaw," "A hundred versts race," "The races of the officers of the Cavalry School," "The study of field riding in the Cavalry School of officers in 1895," "About the breaking-in of a horse," "The sword and the *nagayka*," "*Manège* (riding-school) and field," "The contemporary state of the question about the art of horse-riding in Germany."

All these articles and essays breathe, as it were, a warm love and admiration of cavalry and horsemanship. V. A. Soukhomlinov looks upon cavalry as the highest form of defence. Cavalry should be the ears and eyes of the army and serve as an impregnable wall, shielding the army from the attacks of the enemy. Cavalry, as in the instance of the cavalry of Stuart, should either operate in front of the army or cover the movements of the

troops, so that the enemy should have no idea of their whereabouts. It should sometimes attack the flanks of the enemy, and on other occasions appear in his rear, causing considerable loss to the enemy's troops. In the opinion of V. A. Soukhomlinov, cavalry should serve its proper purpose and be prepared for a cavalry charge and not for the open field. It should serve as a cold weapon, because, in Soukhomlinov's opinion, firing from horseback is harmful and demoralising. He quotes in corroboration of his idea numerous authors, and enumerates many facts, all proving his vast erudition, his competence and acquaintance with the subject.

Cavalry, says Vladimir Alexandrovitsh, owes its regeneration to Charles XII. He looked upon cavalry as upon an independent, powerful weapon, powerful on account of the quick blow it can deal to the enemy. The daring, chivalrous spirit of Charles XII corresponded with the spirit of the cavalry which he himself, with drawn sword in hand, led in the field. He led them not only against cavalry, but also against infantry, even against fortresses, without firing a shot, and always with equal success, thanks to his quick and firm onslaught.

Peter the Great knew how to appre-

ciate the tactics of Charles XII—and his Swedish dragoons, with their long spears, were taken as models in the reorganisation of the regular cavalry of Russia. In the Northern War, Peter gave instructions that the cavalry should be exclusively employed only as a cold weapon. "The cavalry"—so ran Peter's instructions—"should not shoot before they have wrought confusion among the enemy with the help of God. They should attack the enemy with their swords only."

Frederick the Great ordered his cuirassiers to exercise themselves once a week in shooting from horseback, "so that these lazy fellows might convince themselves of the ineffectiveness of such firing."

In the Regulations of 1756 it is said:

"The action and strength of the horsemen who advantageously attack the enemy and carry off victory, consist in the bravery of the men, in the good use they make of their swords, in the quick and cruel blow they deal the enemy by a quick race (full gallop)."

Gouvonov used to teach:

"Attack! Horsemen first! Cut, pierce, drive, give no quarter! Horsemen should be active everywhere! It is not advisable for the cavalry to fire, but is far better for them to make use of spear and sword, except, of course, in the case of pursuing

the enemy and endeavouring to shoot him down; but even then it is better to make use of the cold weapons."

He then enumerates a number of facts corroborating the aforesaid theory. "In the Polish campaign in 1831, the Russian horsemen did not exactly cover themselves with glory. They suffered heavy losses, and in battle only created confusion. All this happened because the commanders ordered the horsemen to fire so that they were at a distance from the opposing cavalry—and did not come near the enemy's infantry. The Poles, on the contrary, never missed an opportunity to teach the Russian horsemen how real cavalry should operate. And even on the occasions when the Russian cavalry defeated that of the Poles, the former paid the penalty for firing from horseback. On May 12, for instance, General Count Tolstoy pursued Khrjanovsky not far from the Old Bridge, and in spite of the Russian victory, the first regiment of chasseurs suffered heavy losses.

"On May 19 General Shtshontsky, together with three squadrons and two batteries, was made prisoner by three insignificant groups of Poles, and all this merely because the Russian soldiers had opened fire from their carbines and had

had no time to draw their swords when the Poles suddenly attacked them. On the other hand, the Gorokhovoe encounter, and especially the attack of the Russian cuirassiers, produced a different result. They carried off a splendid victory against the excellent Polish infantry simply because they had acted in accordance with the regulations of Peter the Great."

Then follow references to the Hungarian campaign, the Crimean war in 1856, when the Austrian cavalry surprised the Prussians by shooting with their revolvers. The results were amazing. On June 29, at Osvyetzina, the Prussians lost two men, whilst the Austrians lost two squadrons. The war between the North and South in America, in which General Stuart, a partisan of the cold arm, excelled, is another example. "There is absolutely no excuse for firing from horseback," concludes Vladimir Alexandrovitsh; "it is not sanctioned by history, contemporary tactics, or even theory." To advise the horsemen that they should first fire and then charge the enemy with drawn swords is absurd —and only from an opponent of cavalry can such advice emanate, luring with fine words the horsemen to their own perdition. Whilst the one cavalry is engaged in discharging its weapons in the air, a

more prudent and well-advised cavalry will fall upon it and even with mere clubs will belabour the "firing horsemen" as they well deserve.

The recent education of the Russian cavalry has given in the present war—as is well known—splendid results, and thus the justness of V. A. Soukhomlinov's point of view has been proved. With their brilliant attacks, not only upon the cavalry and infantry, but also upon the artillery of the enemy, the Russian cavalry have obtained surprising results. Discussing the question how such cavalry could best be obtained, Vladimir Alexandrovitsh expresses himself as follows :

" Cavalry consists of a body and a soul. The soul of cavalry is its moral side, the preparation and capacity of the whole organisation to carry out all its tasks which fall to the lot of the cavalry in the midst of the other parts of the army. The body is the material strength without which the former has no stronghold, for without a good cavalry, organisation, and good riders, all the best intentions, all the ardour and enthusiasm will not help to make the cavalry a really effective portion of the attacking army. Man and horse have been so created by nature that they seem to be destined for each other. So it is really in the steppes, where man and

horse form one unit. Everything is going on naturally in the steppes, and there is no reason whatever to have recourse to artificial measures. The horsemen there are such good and excellent riders, not only because they have ridden on horseback over an enormous number of thousands of versts, but also because, having lived with the horse from their very childhood, they know the animal so well—intimately like themselves.

"Just as little as a cabman who has driven about Petrograd over, say, ten thousand versts, can claim to be an expert driver, so a horseman who has ridden over a number of versts on the back of his horse like a dead weight, remains at best only a weak, passive rider, often simply a heavy bundle capable only of making the horse tired, in spite of the saddle.

"All the regulations of European cavalry are based upon the necessity of producing artificially good riders—and woe unto those who imagine that in order to form a good cavalryman one has merely to take an animal on four feet with a tail and a mane, place upon its back a soldier, and send this combination away over a number of thousands of versts for self-education or, better, mutual instruction.

"The thorough acquaintance with the

horse and the formation of good horsemen should be a task of vast importance for the commanders of the cavalry branch of the army, if they really understand the value of this weapon and are anxious to see it successfully employed on the battlefield. The young cavalry tyro should be properly placed on horseback, be taught not to hamper the horse in its movements, but, on the contrary, help his companion on the battlefield and economise as much as possible the strength of the animal with the utmost care. This is a matter of extreme importance.

"'Excuse me,' you often hear, 'you cannot teach him anything; he sits so firmly in the saddle—absolutely sticks to it.'

"And yet the seat of this firm rider always rises when the horse begins to gallop, rises high and falls down heavily upon the back of the horse. The question is: Why should such knocking down of the horse's back, this heavy pressure of a load, exhaust both horse and rider, wasting the strength of the animal? Simply because the fundamental teaching was faulty, because the rider, instead of being placed, was only *thrown* upon the horse's back and left to himself, to find, as best he could, a comfortable position in the saddle.

"The riding-school can, of course, do no harm, and it is extremely important that the rider should be taught about the equilibrium of the horse and active riding. Those who will take the trouble to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with the main points of our service, will not deny the fact that it is impossible to do without the riding-school, which is instrumental in making the horses obedient and well balanced in their movements. Those who deny this fact are mistaken, just as those who see in the riding-school the goal of cavalry service.

"But having learned in the riding-school all that he could in preparing for the field, it is a crime to remain there any longer, and therefore the rider should go into the open and endeavour to prove that for a good horseman, seated upon a well-trained horse, there are practically no obstacles. There are so many so-called good riders who are ready to ride on horseback four or five thousand versts, but who in face of the least obstacle prefer honestly to take their battle companion by the bridle and get over a little ditch with six legs, and whilst passing over a ford cling to the saddle-bow so as to stick more closely to the horse. And yet in conversation these gentlemen are progressists in cavalry matters. The *manège*

is a routine for them, the pace is too slow, as it does not bring sufficiently quickly their tired, passive body to the end of the march."

Soukhomlinov attaches great importance to exercises and manœuvres, but as the exercises cannot take place continually he turns his attention to the hunt and horse-races.

"The strength of the cavalry consists in its mobility and quickness, even upon a difficult ground. Such qualities are easily developed by means of hunts and horse-races.

"The cavalry officer should be possessed of a brave, enterprising, daring spirit, and, if you like, even of a cheerful temperament, and all this is not acquired and developed in either the riding-school or during sleepy long marches. It would, however, be erroneous to imagine that those who are clever in horse-races or have gained prizes are for that very reason good riders and cavalrymen. The great question is—how to ride. The words *manège* and field should be combined judiciously, and herein lies the secret of the education to be received by all the representatives of cavalry—a secret which was well known to the best and most competent authorities on cavalry matters."

Speaking of the horse, Vladimir Alex-

androvitsh advises a very careful and judicious treatment of the animal. A horse should never be exhausted, but gradually trained to its work. Thus, dwelling upon the question of an often excessive fondling and spoiling of the horse, or, as he calls it, a particular and exaggerated care of the fat and well-nourished body of the horse, he quotes, as an example, an incident which occurred during a parade in the presence of the Emperor Nicholas Pavlovitsh. The cavalry regiments appeared upon well-nourished horses and rushed up with ardour to the spot where the inspection was to take place. The Emperor was highly pleased. As soon as the inspection began, however, a number of horses fell down! At the same time V. A. Soukhomlinov makes fun of the learned commandant theorists, who apply to the horses their specially composed *régime*.

"The horses are reading the newspapers," ironically remarks "Ostap Bondarenko," "and they only require eyeglasses to make their learned appearance complete."

Almost with a feeling of horror Vladimir Alexandrovitsh Soukhomlinov speaks of the unnecessary training in the *manège* and the juggler's tricks worthy of the circus which were formerly in fashion in the

cavalry regiments, in view of showing off at parades. With disapproval he speaks of those times when the non-commissioned officers were obliged to dance a quadrille on horseback.

What V. A. Soukhomlinov demands is a military and warlike training of horses and men. All the unnecessary circus tricks and exaggeration as a diametrically opposed pole to the *manège*, such, for instance, as the exclusive training in the wood, he severely deprecates. The cavalry should, in his opinion, unite the knowledge acquired in the riding-school of treating the horse with that of field service, without exaggeration. Such a cavalry becomes, from his point of view, an excellent material in the hands of an able and talented leader. Only a talented leader is capable of displaying in the field the invaluable qualities and merit of the cavalry. As an example of brilliant horsemanship, as a guide for cavalry officers, Soukhomlinov then translates into the Russian language, accompanying it by his valuable remarks and notes, long descriptions of the great cavalry battle at Brendy.

Apart from the skilful writer, Soukhomlinov shows in his literary productions that he is also a serious thinker and a specialist, with a broad outlook, but not

disdaining even apparently small details, as upon these apparent details there may sometimes depend success or failure. Thus he devotes a considerable space to the serious question of the shoeing of the horses, and shows that in the national war the cavalry of Denis Davydov and of Orlov Davydov had an advantage over the French cavalry simply because the Russian horses had been excellently shod. He also attributes the successful issue of a number of battles, such as that of Vyazma, to the same cause.

"The French horses," he writes, "had bad shoes and sometimes even none at all, and consequently they either fell down or could not move so quickly as the Russian horses of the Cossacks."

Such a competent and deep knowledge of the cavalry on the part of V. A. Soukhomlinov naturally resulted in his making the Russian cavalry very efficient.

CHAPTER VII

THE WELL-BEING OF THE ARMY

As regards the military training of the infantry, V. A. Soukhomlinov fully endorses the views of General Dragomirov. "The authors who have pointed out the nullity and the unimportance of the bayonet in our time, are, without noticing it, making an almost elementary mistake in logic: they only seem to have in view one side of the position, i.e. the firing of the enemy, forgetting that on our side, too, an exactly similar firing exists. They usually place against themselves the rifle-shots and artillery; a heavy firing ensues, they are naturally frightened, and consequently begin to talk absurdities. Had they borne in mind the fact that on our side, too, there are infantry marksmen and artillery, they would not have failed to perceive the equal data, mutually growing short—and consequently unable to disturb the fundamental basis. The rarity of attacks with the bayonet proves not the nullity of the bayonet, as some are inclined to imagine, but the rarity of an

enemy inclined and equally capable for an attack with the bayonet.

"Let us imagine an army which relied for its success on the battlefield simply upon firing, and felt pretty safe that it would not allow the enemy to approach up to the distance when the bayonet can be made use of; then imagine that such an army meets an enemy who, although not disdaining to fire, also remembers the bayonet—the first army would be absolutely stunned by an unexpected terrible onslaught, when it really came to a hand-to-hand fight with the enemy.

"It cannot be denied that in the present state of armaments the bullet can, at a short distance, be as effective as the bayonet, but this is only possible for a fearless army, i.e. an army capable of making use of the bayonet when, after the firing, it comes to a hand-to-hand tussle with the enemy."

Soukhomlinov attaches great importance to the artillery and devotes to it a good deal of space in his works. His most characteristic view in this relation, and one which he endeavours to inculcate in the soldier, is his conviction that the defence of the arms is as important as the defence and safeguard of the flag.

Vladimir Alexandrovitsh's views with regard to the sanitary well-being of the

army are characterised in his works by the Russian proverb which says: "A fine cage does not fill a bird's belly."

"Who is not aware of the fact," he writes, "that the sanitary well-being of the army is obtained by four means: (1) Good and proper food for the men. (2) Adequate and judicious work. (3) Sufficient rest and sleep—and (4) The proper keeping in order of the quarters of the soldiers?

"The first condition depends entirely upon the armies themselves, in spite of the almost more than modest allocation to be abundant. The allocation is in reality such that the food ought to be very good indeed. And the food is really very good where the supply for the army is looked after not merely in a formal manner. All the well-written reports, beautifully phrased, all the beautifully painted casks containing *kvass* exhibited in the soldiers' kitchens, and similar attributes, are of little value. What is really important is the intelligent housekeeping which is often noticeable in the very faces of the soldiers and subalterns.

"Such are also the conditions of judicious work. The extent of work will never produce an extraordinary fatigue, or over-fatigue of the soldiers, if the work is carried out judiciously and with proper

attention, and if it takes the form, not of an exclusive training, but of prudent bringing-up and education of the army. Arbitrariness and fancy, however, will have a bad effect, and it may often happen that the strength of a regiment is simply exhausted and wasted away on account of the tests dictated by excessive demands and requirements. The abnormal state may always be ascribed not so much to the extent of the actual work, as to the nature of the requirements.

"If a man has sufficient rest after the most exerting labour, the result will be only a healthy fatigue and consequently a good appetite and a sound sleep. The smallest care in this relation will not remain without happy results.

"The most difficult of the above-mentioned conditions is the fourth—the one relating to the housing of the soldiers. The fundamental, most serious circumstance, which exercises a paramount influence upon the health of the army, does not really depend directly upon the commanding officers. One cannot, of course, turn old, damp, and half-ruined barracks into new ones, but one can easily improve hygienic conditions. And here lime, reddish sand or sawdust, or nice smelling fumigating powder are of little use and will not remedy the actual state of things.

How often does it happen that only just in certain barracks or in a certain portion of them the soldiers suffer from typhoid fever? A thorough rebuilding, the changing of the rotten floor, a proper repair of the foundations, a new plaster, and a good disinfecting—such are a few of the remedies in these cases, remedies to which a good and careful master should turn his attention on such occasions, although they will naturally prove more expensive than the ordinary means usually employed, such as the whitewashing of the ceiling, the repair of the eternally smoking chimneys, and a few other innocent, chronic works of reparation carried out in barracks. The care and security of the sanitary arrangements are in the hands of the immediate chiefs of this organisation. All that is required of them are energy, good intentions, carefulness, and a well-thought-out execution of the requirements, fully defined and explained by the necessary orders and instructions.

"Naturally, if the bird's belly is full, why not see that the cage, too, shall be a fine one, for then both the cage will be fine and the bird's belly full—and what more can one wish for?"

Among the sanitary measures employed in peacetime, measures calculated to keep up the spirit of the army in war, V. A.

Soukhomlinov recommends the opposition against the use of alcoholic drinks. The good Russian cup, and even a slight state of intoxication, which was looked upon as one of the most elementary and necessary means for rousing the spirit of an army, have found a severe judge in Vladimir Alexandrovitsh.

Describing a little feast which Denis Davydov was compelled to offer, on account of numerous reasons, to his regiment, Vladimir Alexandrovitsh attributes to Davydov a feeling of deep discontent.

"To-day I am without an army," said Davydov, when he saw the banquet at its height, "although no one is exactly drunk—and what will happen to-morrow we shall see."

On the following day the men who had drunk freely the night before walked about like those possessed. Cossacks and hussars, with heads heavy from the carouse, crept up upon the backs of their horses and limply and slowly carried out instructions. Having made the round of the ranks and greeted his men, Davydov noticed that the reaction had reached a high degree indeed. The red eyes, the soulless faces, and the dejected general aspect of the men convinced him that it would be quite impossible to attempt anything serious on that day. It was

soon necessary to make halt, and the men were eagerly looking for something to get over the fit of intoxication.

To this banquet V. A. Soukhomlinov also attributes the further unhappy encounter with the enemy on that day. "The reconnaissance had been placed very badly, the columns of the enemy were allowed to come too near, a fact which was only noticed when two infantry columns made a movement and occupied their positions. There was a fearful bustle in Davydov's regiment, and that model quietness and calm which always secured him victory were for once absent."

The present war is a marked exception on account of the complete absence of alcoholic drinks in the Russian army. Paying proper tribute to the education and the spirit of the army, Vladimir Alexandrovitsh does not lose sight of the means calculated to instil and rouse such a spirit. He, therefore, directs attention, in his many writings, to the corresponding equipment of the men and the uniform of the officers.

V. A. Soukhomlinov knows very well that a respect for outward appearances is innate in man and deeply rooted in his breast. He mentions that even the most savage tribes take care of the outward appearance and consider it of such im-

portance that their first consent to respect unarmed individuals belonging to the hostile tribe referred chiefly to those men who went out to fetch the red ornamental clay in order to complete their original and primitive toilet! Soukhomlinov, therefore, points out the splendid uniform of Murat, and minutely describes the outward appearance of Napoleon, his costume, his horse, and his suite.

Talking of the hussars, he dwells on the description of their uniforms.

"Fifty men of the hussars had been almost stripped, but thanks to the peculiarity of the form of the hussars they retained, as the French say, their *cachet*, even in a worn-out aspect, and their brave cavalry appearance."

The honour of the uniform of the army is not an empty sound, but a tradition, containing a deep meaning. He writes that the changing of the names of the cavalry into that of dragoons and the metamorphosis of all the uniforms into one homogeneous form, that of dragoons, was a heavy blow for the cavalry.

Replying to one writer, who is an authority on the question of the homogeneous uniform of dragoons, Vladimir Alexandrovitsh writes as follows:

"Vassily Silovitsh is of a different opinion; he thinks that the famous Nije-

gorodsky regiment, which has, so to say, grown grey in battle and is distinguished among all the other cavalry regiments, did not derive its bravery from its brilliant uniforms. Satisfied with their modest uniforms of dragoons, the stalwart men of the Nijegorodsky regiment, in the Caucasian war as well as in the Turkish campaigns, gave ample proof of their valour and performed wonders of bravery. They proved what wonderful results a fearless cavalry can obtain in our century of firearms."

From the above remarks the not less "wonderful" deduction ("for our century of firearms") is made that as the Nijegorodsky regiment, which "had grown grey in battle," "did not derive its bravery from its brilliant uniforms," it would be logical to dress all the other regiments of Russian cavalry in the uniforms of the dragoons, even those regiments which had grown grey in battle clad in quite different uniforms.

With equal conviction and faith in our "century of firearms," one should be entitled to declare that as the regiment of hussars of Pavlograd under Shengraben had "shown wonders of bravery" and had derived its bravery from its hussar uniform, all the other regiments should be arrayed in a hussar uniform, including the

Nijegorodsky regiment, which would thus become even braver, as it would be able to derive encouragement from its dress—which it could not have done when it wore its "modest uniform."

"M. Silovitsh himself admits that the changing of the names of the hussars and uhlans was somewhat of an operation, but he is absolutely mistaken when he imagines that the wound has now healed up. Not only do the officers of the former regiments of hussars and uhlans still dream of the return to the *pelisse* of hussars, but even the inferior officers and men, on their return home, often make for themselves an 'old uniform.' And is it not a characteristic question which was asked by a little *moujik* of the Ryazan *government* (province), who, on his return home from the regiment of hussars, inquired whether there was any truth in the rumour that the Emperor was about to pardon the hussars and uhlans?

"It is almost a pity that one could not make an experiment by installing M. Vassily Silovitsh in a hussar family, dress him in a *pelisse*, and then, a few years afterwards, compel him to live through that operation of which he speaks so lightheartedly. It would be interesting, indeed, to observe whether and when his wound would heal up. It is possible that

in his old age all his wounds would heal up, but the wound of the hussar would, I have no doubt, remain everlasting—until his very death.

"'Our own trouble is a big tumour—but other people's scab is only a slight itching,' says popular Russian wisdom. This proverb may be applied—very rightly—to the theories of the amateur author on military matters."

That the "wound" has not yet healed up is clearly proved by the fact that the question is being discussed by a commission ordered to consider the salaries of officers and the unanimous decision of the aforesaid commission in favour of the returning to hussars and uhlans of their previous uniforms. It is no doubt due to his imaginary tender-heartedness when M. Silovitsh says: "The wound has healed up, why open it again?" In reality it does not appear to have healed up, but the cruel-hearted author, on the contrary, has opened it. The wound *can* heal up, however. What is wanted is simply to re-establish the names of hussars and uhlans and give them back their corresponding and respective outward features.

Soukhomlinov, in his capacity of War Minister, proceeded very simply with a view to solving this question.

"The Russians," writes a French colonel, Edouard Maire, "did not even try to solve this insoluble question, which has been perplexing us for the last fifteen years. We have been pretending to give the army a uniform suitable for all occasions, for parade, everyday work, for mobilisation, and for the battlefield. The very simple fact that village and urban labourers have different clothes for everyday work and for festive occasions shows that only one decision should be taken in this direction, namely, to have one uniform for parades, a uniform which would fill with pride men and officers, and another for the battlefield, one that is imperceptible, in accordance with the most recent lessons taught by war. Whilst we have been discussing this question, whilst we have been wasting valuable time, and whilst the clouds in the meantime have gathered on the horizon, the Russians have supplied their armies with a uniform of a defensive colour—and at the same time designed another magnificent tunic for parade purposes, one that dates from the reign of Nicholas I. Such an equipment resuscitates the glorious period of the Napoleonic wars and at once reminds the Russian soldier of the years 1812 and 1854, of Borodino and the bastions of Sebastopol."

Colonel Maire is simply in ecstasy about the equipment of the men of the Semeonovsky regiment and the Imperial Guard. On this occasion he mentions his conversation with a Russian officer who expressed his feeling of unpleasant astonishment at the pitiful uniforms of French soldiers, especially in Paris, which produce a feeling of prejudice against the French army. "We, too," concludes Colonel Maire, "ought not to have neglected the extent of consideration due to our army, and a good equipment considerably furthers such esteem and consideration."

Thanks to the endeavours of V. A. Soukhomlinov, the incidents which occurred during the Russo-Japanese war are now quite impossible.

According to the testimony of those who took part in that campaign, it seems that the men who were constantly risking their lives, exposed to continual dangers in a strange and foreign land, who were dejected on account of constant defeats, still felt most of all insulted and hurt when the Japanese called them ragamuffins.

CHAPTER VIII

REFORMING THE ARMY

From the military stories of Vladimir Alexandrovitsh there is wafted the spirit of experience of a fighting cavalryman, a man who has gone through all the reverses of battle. Those details which are usually omitted add a certain finish, a clearness, and a right perspective to his picture.

The man who is unacquainted with the conditions of military life imagines it to consist of a series of brave cavalry charges, of obstinate, cruel, and beautiful battles, of manifestations of heroism and deeds of bravery—in a word, in accordance with the pictures drawn or painted by military writers or artists. All the weekday, everyday life of the army—with all its minutest details, requirements, etc., which in the end assure victory—is entirely overlooked. V. A. Soukhomlinov dwells with pleasure upon these details—and in this respect he reminds us of the descriptions of battles given by Leon Nicholaevitsh Tolstoy.

The simple, artless description how

Davydov, in the company of his officers, is eating his cabbage soup, after a long and fatiguing march; how he enjoys this soup and the pieces of fat meat floating in it; the description of the general silence of the officers, whilst they are eating and appeasing their hunger from the earthen soup-basins, produces a really touching impression. Before our eyes there at once emerges the picture of life in war, a life full of vicissitudes and reverses, a true and wonderful picture.

"On entering the hut Davydov found almost all the officers of his regiment assembled, and the pleasant, appetising smell of the soup which met his nostrils was so agreeable to him who had passed the whole day on horseback that he gleefully rubbed his hands. Having made the sign of the cross before the holy image in the corner, Denis Vassilevitsh sat down among his officers. Basins full of hot cabbage-soup were brought in. Pieces of meat and yellow fat were floating in the soup. On the table were also loaves of black bread, baskets of linden bark full of quartz-like salt, and white wooden jugs containing the reddish, foaming *kvass*. Davydov had a travelling *maître d'hôtel*, a certain hussar named Mazyryouk, whose business it was to obtain whatever viands he could.

"'Mazyryouk,' gaily shouted Denis Vassilevitsh, 'and where is the vodka, you murderer?'

"'Here we are, sir,' replied the somewhat clumsy hussar, placing upon the table a small oaken cask and a couple of silver cups.

"Having drained a cup, pure as a tear, of that vivifying joy, they started upon the soup in mess order, several men eating out of one basin with their wooden spoons. And with what an appetite the food was being devoured, how tasteful it was!

"For a while no one said a word, the horizon of the soup only gradually descending to the bottom of the basin, revealing more and more the pieces of fat meat. From time to time another cup was drained, the mouth was wiped—a kind of quacking noise being heard. As the hunger was gradually appeased conversation began."

These lines breathe purely Tolstoyan tones. It is only just to add that Leon Nicholaevitsh Tolstoy is V. A. Soukhomlinov's favourite author, and the former's *Peace and War* is the latter's text-book!

But Vladimir Alexandrovitsh is at his best in his critical sketches and descriptions. Here we perceive a strong and

clear intelligence ; the exposition is simple, brief, and ingenious.

Such was Soukhomlinov, when, in his capacity of War Minister, he started the realisation of the most important reforms in the Russian army. He occupied this high post in a most difficult moment, in a moment when all the passions had not yet been appeased—and the grief caused by the continual reverses suffered by the Russian army was still fresh. The army was generally being held responsible for Russia's misfortune, and the War Minister had a trying time. In spite of all this, Soukhomlinov was able quickly to turn the whole work and the army life into the right channel, a channel of perfection and strength. He began by systematically uniting and concentrating the authorities, discharging the various commissions and committees who were each working in a separate direction, taking little or no account of the general state of military life. This unification made itself felt very quickly, manifesting itself in a number of reforms following each other in quick succession.

It is difficult and almost impossible to grasp the purely military character of all the reforms introduced by the War Minister in the course of the last few years. Here we shall only endeavour to give an

outline of the more important reforms, pointing out their significance, what value they have as far as the fighting capacity of the army is concerned, and, *en passant*, we shall also endeavour, as far as possible, to illustrate our words by examples drawn from the present war. The reforms introduced during the last few years may be divided into thirteen groups and categories :

1. Reforms relating to the central and district administrations.
2. Reforms relating to the organisation of the army.
3. Reforms concerning the complement of the army.
4. Reforms in mobilising the regiments.
5. Reforms in preparing for military operations.
6. Reforms relating to the arming of the army.
7. Reforms in supplying the men with technical means.
8. Reforms in supplying the men with everything relating to the Commissariat.
9. Reforms relating to the teaching and instruction of the men.
10. Reforms relating to sanitary measures.
11. Reforms tending to keep up morality among the men.
12. Reforms tending to ameliorate the

lives of men and officers when leaving the service.

13. Reforms relating to defensive and other arms.

In the further exposition we shall consider, in the same order, the various measures introduced in the military department during the last years.

First of all, it is necessary to point out here that as regards recent years a decree of His Imperial Majesty appointed the War Minister as the sole reporter on matters relating to military administration. Many will remember the heavy consequences which ensued from the fact that a dual authority had control over the Russian armed forces during the Russo-Japanese war.

The concentration of all reports relating to military matters under the control of the War Minister enabled the latter to carry out in all his reforms the views and ideas which he found necessary in conformity with the reorganisation of the army. The control of all matters relating to fortresses was handed over to the General Staff, i.e. the organisation called upon to superintend the strategic and tactical part of the preparation of the army.

Formerly the fortresses were under the control and direction of the corps of

engineers, and in questions concerning the defence of fortresses the General Staff could express their view, which, however, the corps of engineers was not at all obliged to accept or to share. Now, all matters relating to the fortresses are under the control and direction of the General Staff. The same decision was applied also to the mobilisation of the army, and it is now the General Staff which is called upon to control the work of mobilisation, i.e. of preparing the army for the battlefield when war is declared. In view of the fact that the above-mentioned direction of certain departments was taken away from the corps of engineers, and especially those connected with defensive measures, the department of engineers was changed into a military technical department and instructed to look after all matters relating to aeronautics, railways, and motor-cars. Thus all technical preparations of the army were concentrated in the hands of a special and competent body possessing the necessary technical knowledge. The direction of all matters relating to the communication and transport of the army was again placed under the control of the General Staff.

Following on the same lines, the War Minister concentrated all matters relating

to the actual preparation of the army for the front in the hands of the General Staff, whilst affairs relating to the instruction of the men and officers, to military service, to the question of the men serving after the expiration of their term of service, were handed over to the Head Staff. Questions relating to military economy are under the control of the chief Commissariat, whilst sanitary arrangements are solely under the direction of the medical department, which is now known as the chief sanitary-military department. Such a division of labour could not but have a good effect upon the general system of the organisation of the army. Thanks to such a minute division of functions among the various departments, that medley and confusion, if we may thus express ourselves, which characterised the activity of the various military departments, and made themselves felt during the Russo-Japanese war, have now disappeared.

The most important reforms were carried out in the organisation of the various regiments. First of all, the reserve parts of the infantry, the artillery, the engineer and railway corps, as well as the fortress infantry and other subsidiary divisions, were abolished. The suppression of the reserves represents a very

important reform. The importance lies in the following fact: in peace times the reserve parts consisted officially of a very small, insignificant number of men and officers, whilst in times of war they were completed, enlarged, and brought up to the required official number by means of new men called out for the reserve lines. It naturally followed that the fighting ability and readiness for the front of the reserve parts were very low and weak. The suppression, therefore, of the reserve divisions and the formation of active regiments greatly and considerably increased the readiness for the front, and the fighting ability of the army.

The suppression also of the infantry stationed in fortresses stands in direct connection with the views now prevalent in military circles and admitted by military authorities. It is a fact that fortresses can no longer impede the march of approaching vast armies, they can only delay for a little while, in a certain place, the invasion of the enemy. In view of such a fact, moments may therefore often occur during a war when the fortress garrison is incorporated in the field army. All European Powers have now realised the fact that the existence of separate infantry regiments garrisoned in fortresses is superfluous—and now, as a rule, ordinary

field regiments are stationed in the fortresses.

In the place of these abolished parts there were formed five infantry divisions and two divisions of Siberian marksmen with artillery and one light brigade with artillery. Apart from this a whole number of new military divisions and regiments was formed, which greatly enhanced and strengthened the fighting ability of the army. Especial attention was paid to the formation of mortar divisions, of heavy field artillery, and also to the formation of aeronautic detachments and companies of wireless telegraphists. Furthermore, eleven light battalions were changed and turned into regiments consisting of two battalions, and in Turkestan the entire infantry was turned into light regiments. Such a change was brought about in consequence of the serious attention paid to the shooting ability of the army and the necessity of maintaining in certain parts and districts regiments of sharpshooters.

Continuing on the way of strengthening and ameliorating the firing ability of the infantry, special attention was paid to the formation of various detachments of machine gunners. The experience of the Japanese war has proved that machine-gun firing is very powerful and that rifle

shooting is only a weak rejoinder to it. One must, therefore, admit that the formation of machine-gun detachments considerably increased the fighting ability of the army. Attaching serious importance to the service of reconnaissance, mounted reconnoitring detachments were formed among the infantry.

With a view to the uniformity and amalgamation of the commandantship, all regiments were divided into thirty-seven army corps, whilst the artillery brigades were included in the system of infantry divisions. Thus, even in peace times, the commander had obtained a complete unification which enabled him better to prepare the army for war times.

Among the numerous reforms relating to the completement of the army we may also count the change effected in the *cantonnement* of the troops, with a view to distributing them more equally over the territory of the Empire, and to introducing, as far as possible, a territorial system in completing the army. A more equal distribution of the army over the Empire greatly facilitates the work of the Commissariat and also leads to a better quartering of the regiments, as on account of the crowding of the regiments the necessity often arose for constructing barracks in obscure and distant

towns and townlets and even in small villages.

With regard to the territorial system of completing the army, such a system is, in many respects, undoubtedly highly desirable. Firstly, such a system does away with the unnecessary transports of the men who are called upon to join the army, and thus the expenses are greatly reduced; secondly, the men, serving in the neighbourhood of their native towns and villages and consequently enabled constantly to communicate with their parents and relatives, are less bored and tired of the service; thirdly, the men, not being far away and disaccustomed of home, are consequently not torn away from the land by their military service; fourthly, the territorial system of completing the army produces a very beneficial effect upon the health of the men, as they are thus serving under climatic conditions to which they have been used from childhood; and finally, such a system greatly hastens and facilitates the mobilisation.

Among the number of essential reforms introduced during the last few years must also be mentioned the promulgation of a new law relating to military service, a law which considerably surpasses the old law. One of the most essential features dis-

tinguishing the new law and giving it preference over the old law is the new situation of volunteers, whose term of service has been considerably increased, and whose instruction has been so arranged that they are enabled to take the place of the officers in war time. To go into details with regard to the excellent points of the new law, which so vastly surpasses the old one, would necessitate a separate treatise. Suffice it to say that the new law is one of the most important steps taken with a view to organising the general military service.

The number of those serving beyond their term has also been considerably increased, and has been brought up to 24,000 men. In view of the present comparatively short term of military service, and also of the absence of special schools for non-commissioned officers, the increase of the number of men serving double time is in itself a very rational measure, as it thus augments the contingent of experienced teachers and guides, who, standing near to the soldier, are well acquainted with his habits and live with him one common life.

In view of the formation of a few new divisions and the changing of others, there arose the necessity of increasing the contingent of recruits, and the War Minis-

ter consequently promulgated a law raising this contingent to the number of 24,984 men.

Endeavouring to ameliorate the commanding system of the army, a few schemes were made, and among these the most essential one may be considered the one relating to the "bordering" census, in virtue of which men who had reached a declining age could be discharged and superannuated. Thus a rejuvenation of the commanding system was obtained. For the purpose of ameliorating the commanding system of the army, a new regulation was also elaborated with regard to the service of the officers of the General Staff. The latter are now obliged to serve and exercise in various kinds of arms, and must command companies, squadrons, battalions, and regiments during certain periods. They lose their right to occupy higher positions if they have failed to fulfil these conditions.

CHAPTER IX

SOME NEW MILITARY PLANS

With regard to the mobilisation of the armies, a number of reforms were introduced with a view to accelerating the getting ready of the men. The splendid results of this measure have been realised during the present war. The enemy did not at all expect to see the Russian army mobilised in, comparatively speaking, a short time and to be put so quickly in order, concentrated and enabled to occupy the necessary positions. The annihilation of the Austrian army on the Lublin front is one of the results of this measure; it was due to the fact that on August 7 the Russian army had finished its strategic development and begun the attack. The Austrians, who had not expected such a rapidity on the part of the Russian army, were unable to carry out their strategic plan, which had been based upon the assumption that the Tsar's army could not concentrate and take up the necessary positions before August 20. This is the result of the reforms with regard to the

mobilisation of the army. The first place among these reforms occupies the measure tending to introduce, as far as possible, a territorial system of completing the army during mobilisation.

The main point of this reform leads to the result that during mobilisation the parts of the army are being completed by men called to join the army reserves living in the very districts where the mobilising army is stationed. Thus the arrival of the men is greatly accelerated and they are able to join their respective regiments as quickly as possible.

Besides the regiments garrisoned in frontier towns being reinforced by inhabitants of the region, the army thus possesses a number of men who are well acquainted with all the local conditions, topographical, economical, and otherwise. Furthermore, such military detachments are actually able to realise the idea of "defending their native land," when the enemy has once invaded the district, for they are actually defending that part of the Empire where they have been born and brought up, where they live and hope to continue to live after the war. The courage, therefore, animating the defenders of this territory coincides with the animation of the man who is fighting for his home, and who is defending his pro-

perty against a robber. A mobilisation list of the militia of the first category was also prepared. Formerly no account had been kept of the militia, and in peace time the militia men had no connection whatever with the military authorities. Now there are special lists for the militia men of the first category, lists kept in the departments of the district military superintendents, and which, consequently, can be communicated at any moment to the military authorities. Thanks to this arrangement, when it became necessary in the present war to call out the militia the military State department knew at once how many militia detachments it could form, where these detachments would be formed, and by which commanding military system they would be completed.

A law was also promulgated relating to the duties of furnishing the army, during the mobilisation, with the necessary number of horses and various vehicles. By vehicles are understood not only various carriages and wagons, but also automobiles and motor-cycles. The happy results of this reform have also manifested themselves in the present war. Thanks to this law the Russian army was in possession of a considerable number of load vehicles of automatic motion, which have hastened and accelerated in a consider-

able measure the work of the Commissariat in furnishing the army with everything required for its daily subsistence.

Anxious to supply the mobilised regiments with young officers, the number of which must necessarily be increased in war time, the War Minister elaborated a law in virtue of which the officers in military schools were allowed to leave, and rules were instituted by which the authorities could avail themselves of the *personnel* of the military academies for mobilisation purposes. Thus, when Germany declared war upon Russia, a number of officers were sent off from the military schools. The officers of the academies were ordered to join their regiments, and it was expected that soon another contingent of commanding officers would leave the military schools, having passed their theoretical examinations and received the necessary practical instruction. Thanks to this measure, the organisation of the commanding officers, especially with regard to the younger ones, has been considerably ameliorated. It became possible to avoid sending the reserve officers, who had remained a number of years far from military service, to the front, but to appoint them for some other duties.

Important reforms were also introduced in the preparation for military

operations. Thus, for instance, new plans were elaborated by the Chief General Staff concerning the war on the western front, in connection with the mobilisation of 1910. How far these plans have proved in conformity with the goal aimed at has been easily shown by the splendid results obtained by the Russian army in the present war in Galicia, and also when the German army from Eastern Prussia invaded the provinces of Suvalki and Lomza.

New rules and instructions were also made with a view to the protection of the rear of the army on the western front. If the entire strength of the front of the army is being concentrated upon checking the advance of the enemy, and the troops are continually kept busy in repulsing the invader, it is absolutely necessary that this army should be placed in a condition enabling it continually to receive all that is required for its existence. It must be able not only to receive at any moment and in sufficient quantities reinforcements and ammunition, but it must also be well fed and dressed. All this depends upon those institutions which are at work in the rear of armies and which from its base supply the army with all that it may require. A correct and judicious organisation of such institu-

tions reflects itself upon the celerity of the military operations of the army at the front. The evacuation of the wounded and the sick, the organisation of the medical assistance—all this depends upon the rear of the army.

The Russo-Japanese war showed that the organisation of the rear of the Russian army was in a somewhat chaotic state, and a proof of this state of affairs may be found in a number of lawsuits against the "heroes at the rear." According to the testimony of those who are taking part in the present war, the new organisation of the rear of the army has already proved its excellence as compared with the Russo-Japanese war. We need only refer to the work done by the Russian railways during the present war. In spite of the uncommon network, the railway companies have been able to cope with the difficult task of transporting the troops upon the western front from nearly all the corners of the vast Russian Empire. And in this respect it must also be borne in mind that the transport of the troops in no way interfered with the passenger-trains, which were run in smaller numbers, but still sufficient for the requirements of the population. Such has not been the case in Germany, where all the passenger trains were suspended for a whole week

whilst the troops were being transported upon the western front. And yet Germany boasts of a comparatively better developed network of railways.

The Russo-Japanese war also showed the importance of observing absolute secrecy with regard to military operations. The information concerning the success or defeat of the army must especially be kept secret from those whose interests are being defended by the army, and who are sacrificing everything for the war. I refer to the population of the invaded districts, who have a right to know what is happening and to receive correct and truthful information from the front. The solution of the dilemma —on the one hand the secrecy of military operations and, on the other, the wish to keep the population well informed as to the movements and success of the operating army—directed the War Minister's attention to the question of military censorship.

The very fact that this question has been raised among others concerning military operations proves that special attention was paid to it. Together with the elaboration of the question about the military censorship, the status of war correspondents and photographers was also settled. We know that in the present war

a number of war correspondents and representatives of the foreign Press have been allowed to accompany the Russian army.

Very important, too, is the decree to supply the army with maps. It is well known that in the German and Austrian armies all the non-commissioned officers are supplied with maps of the districts in which their regiments are operating. These maps are very precise, important points being printed in large type. In the Russo-Japanese war, the Russians absolutely lacked maps of the districts in which their army operated. Not only non-commissioned officers, but the captains and commandants also, had no maps, and the result of such a state of affairs made itself felt. Special attention was therefore paid to this question—and a large quantity of maps was furnished to the army, so that not only the officers and non-commissioned officers, but also all those who were entrusted with a somewhat independent task, were at once supplied with a map.

With regard to the communications in the rear of the army, and the enrolment of the voluntary elements, special attention was paid to the organisation of automobile conveyance. A special project about the position of the voluntary automobile association was elaborated. This

plan has now been brought into life, and the voluntary motorists are now rendering immense service, not only to the rear of the army but also to the front.

Very important is the question of the supply furnished to the army by the Commissariat. We all remember the Commissariat *épopée* of 1910, which ended in the condemnation of a number of officials of the Commissariat, guilty of having neglected their duties. These lawsuits proved that the Commissariat had been working in such a way and in accordance with rules and customs which are absolutely inadmissible in such an important question as supplying the army. It was proved that the entire organisation of the Commissariat wanted a complete pulling down, and that it was not sufficient to sentence a few officials, but that the whole system had to be altered. Years, of course, are required to carry out the work properly, but whatever could be accomplished in a short space of time, with a view to ameliorating this department of the army, has been done.

One of the most important measures taken in this department is the establishment of a base for purposes of the Commissariat. A base, as is well known, is a point from which an army starts its operations and whence it is also sup-

plied with all its requirements. A base, therefore, or a basal zone, must, on the one hand, be situated near the operating army, but, on the other, its situation must be such that should the army be compelled to retire the base would not fall into the hands of the enemy. This question the department of the Commissariat had to decide when it formed the basal zones or bases. The present war has proved that the bases have been established in such a way that, in spite of the fact that the Russian armies were operating on two fronts, the Prussian and the Austrian, operating also under different conditions—on the one side invading Hungary and overrunning the Carpathians, and on the other retreating to the Niemen —the troops were nevertheless always well supplied by the Commissariat.

In the beginning of the war the Austrian army evidently intended to seize the Russian base, but the effort was frustrated, simply because the base was at a sufficient distance from the frontier.

Special attention has also been paid to the protection of the southern front of the Empire, that front which since the last Russo-Turkish war remained absolutely inviolable from the engineering point of view. Up till now (1914) the Russians have not yet had any opportunity to

operate on their southern front, but the moment is very near when this will become necessary. Turkey has taken up such an attitude that a war with her may break out at any moment. The strengthening, therefore, of the southern front, both from an engineering and from artillery points of view, becomes a necessity of the moment, and the measures taken in this respect are exceedingly important.

In the instructions issued for German airmen we see that already in peace time they were ordered to pay special attention to and to study the frontiers of adjacent realms. They were instructed to take plans, make photographic copies, collect notes of all the regions they perceived during their flight over the neighbouring territories. During the past few years numerous German and Austrian aviators visited Russian territory, and came down at a considerable distance from the frontiers. This fact proves the intense work of the Austrian and German aviators and their endeavours to carry out the above-mentioned instructions. A number of regulations were therefore issued in the course of recent years, all with the intention of limiting the visits of foreign aviators, until the western frontier of the Empire was closed entirely to them, and special laws were fixed.

CHAPTER X

ARMS AND THE MEN

IMPORTANT reforms have also been introduced with regard to the arming of the army. The experience gained in the Russo-Japanese war taught Russia that the best and most effective fire is that of machine guns. And yet during the entire Japanese war they had none. A special type of machine gun was therefore elaborated, and the army supplied with a sufficient quantity, namely, four for each battalion of the infantry of the first and second front line; and, apart from these, thirty-two mounted detachments were also instituted. The present war has already realised the splendid results of this reform. As an example let us quote the fight at Drusgenik, where the Russians defended the passage of the Niemen—and where entire German regiments, endeavouring to cross the river, were annihilated by the machine-gun fire.

Already before the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese war an effort was made to change the armament of the Russian

field artillery and to supply it with quick-firing guns of the model of 1902. This work, however, proceeded so slowly that in 1911 not all the artillery regiments had as yet been supplied. A special commission was therefore appointed in 1911 to explain the reason of such a slow procedure. The commission explained a number of defects in the artillery departments, and the War Minister consequently paid special attention to this matter, endeavouring to place the artillery upon a right footing, and taking such measures as would hasten the supply of the guns. Thus the light artillery was supplied with quick-firing guns, the material portion of the mountain-howitzers and the heavy artillery was got ready, and all the mortar batteries were supplied with new howitzers of the model of 1909, which represents the last word of technics in the domain of field howitzers. The war has proved the ballistic properties of this type of arms. The mounted artillery, too, was supplied with new guns of the system of Shneyder & Co. These guns, weighing much less than the old ones, possess a comparatively much better ballistic power than the former.

The object of war is to annihilate the armies of the enemy, but contemporary military science tells us that such an

annihilation should be obtained by caus ing the enemy the least possible suffering. One should endeavour to cause the men of the hostile army as little as possible suffering—and yet remove as many of them as possible from the front lines, and diminish the fighting power of the enemy. It is, therefore, the endeavour of technics to invent such a bullet as, in spite of its exactness of aim, causes the least suffering to the wounded. The contemporary so-called sharp-edged bullet answers this purpose, for, although soaring over a long distance, it retains its stability and yet causes comparatively light wounds. Measures have accordingly been taken to prepare a considerable quantity of cartridges with such sharp-edged bullets, to the number of one milliard and 450 million. In order to hasten the fabrication of the bullets, new factories were established, so that no lack of ammunition for the infantry is felt in the present war. The reforms in the domain of the supply of technical means and engineering implements are not so palpable, but, nevertheless, we cannot help mentioning the construction of a number of wireless stations. We need not point out the importance and value of wireless telegraphy in war. It is very comprehensible that the establishment of new wireless tele-

graphic stations in war time enables the various parts of the army to communicate with each other even over long distances, a possibility which was not always obtained with the old stations.

When speaking of the important rôle which the supplying of the army with all its requirements plays in war time, we mentioned the sad state of affairs noticed during the Russo-Japanese war—and we pointed out that during the last few years a thorough reform had been introduced in the department of the Commissariat. In this respect many sides of Russian military economy have been touched upon, and the general conjunction of these reforms resulted in the soldiers being properly fed and clad. (In the Russo-Japanese war, the Russian soldiers were ragged and hungry.) This new state of affairs has been obtained by a number of measures, among which we may count especially the establishment of direct pecuniary allowances granted by the *governments* for the economic requirements of the army—and the acquisition of provisions directly from the manufacturers, through the boards of the Zemstvos,* thus avoiding the intermedi-

* Zemstvo = A district and provincial assembly which attends to the administration of the economic affairs of the district and the province.

aries and contractors. A new measure was further introduced with regard to the reception of provisions and supply by the armies, and three refrigerative depots were built near the Smolensk, Kiev, and Vladivostock fortresses, and in four fortresses meat refrigerators were constructed.

Exceedingly important reforms were also introduced in the domain of military instruction. Special attention was paid to the raised level of instruction given to the officers. The Japanese war showed Russia that the insufficient education received by her officers reflected itself in their work, in their capacity as independent commanders. There were occasions on which the officers were unable to understand the written instructions and orders transmitted to them by the superior officers, with the result that they did not carry out the orders properly. The insufficiency of their general development also prevented them from properly understanding and valuing a military position. The officer, in his *rôle* of teacher of the soldier, often proved himself ignorant of the subjects which he was called upon to teach to his inferiors.

All this, as a whole, induced the War Ministry to raise the level of education among the officers. All the military

schools, therefore, in which the course was of two years, were changed into military colleges with a three years' course, and the acceptance of students who had not passed through a high school was considerably limited. In order to make the superintendence of these schools more thorough and regular, they were taken away from under the control of the Chief Staff and placed under that of the chief Department of Military Institutions and Colleges. A new programme was also introduced in all military schools and the corps of cadets. With a view to making the teaching more uniform, new and similar manuals were adopted in all the military schools.

Special attention was also paid to the raising of the shooting capacity of the officers, and for this purpose a special course was arranged in all corps of cadets; in all military schools the students further received marks for their efficiency in shooting. Shooting being practised in all schools, the allotment of cartridges for this purpose has been considerably increased. In order to form good marksmen the students in military schools were ordered to follow a practical course in the officers' shooting school, so as to make them efficient, not only theoretically but also practically.

All these reforms with regard to the education and preparation of future officers have produced very satisfactory results.

According to the testimony of commanding superior officers, the level of education and the development of the officers have considerably increased in the past few years. On joining their regiments they are already in possession of sufficient practical knowledge, and are well prepared to lead and instruct the subalterns. Thanks to such a state of affairs, an improvement has also been noticed in the instruction of the young soldiers. The shooting capacity of the regiments is considerably greater. The officers of the infantry regiments take a lively interest in it, are establishing shooting circles and associations, and are giving out prizes, etc.

The present war has proved that all these measures produced satisfactory results. The firing of the Russian infantry is considerably superior to that of the enemy. Being conscious of his duty and his obligations, the officer has come nearer to the soldier, and has learned to understand the latter, with the result that a strong welding of officers and soldiers has manifested itself. The mutual faith and love are a guarantee of further successes.

As the army has been increased, the necessity has also arisen for the increase of the contingent of officers. For this purpose necessary attention has been paid to the military schools, the number of which has been raised, so as to increase the complement of students and officers.

After the Japanese war the enormous incompleteness of the contingent of officers was noticed in various parts of the army; it often surpassed fifty or sixty per cent. There were regiments in which this incompleteness reached even seventy-five per cent. In order to prevent such an undesirable reoccurrence the following measures were adopted:

(1) The lists of nine military schools were enlarged.

(2) The Sergius Artillery School was established at Odessa.

(3) The lists of the military topographical school were increased—and, finally,

(4) Projects were elaborated with a view to enlarging the military school of Irkutsk, to establishing new infantry schools at Kiev and Tashkent, of a fourth for artillery, a second for engineers, and three temporary military schools.

Together with the elaboration of the question concerning the preparation of the inferior officers, serious attention was also paid to the instruction of the superior

officers. A project was made to raise the lists of the Imperial Nicholas Military Academy to the number of 150 studying officers. Hitherto the Imperial Nicholas Military Academy prepared officers especially for service in the General Staff. These men, on leaving the Academy, often passed all their time of service in the staffs, coming very little into contact with the actual life of the army, and entering the latter only for a short time. Now, special attention is being paid so that the officers who have received a higher military education will not be allowed to sever their connection with the front. On the contrary, only after having served under all the arms are they permitted to return, for a comparatively short space of time, to the work in chancellery.

The certificates entitling the officers to enter the service of the General Staff depend upon the celerity with which they accomplish their duties in the lines. The result has been that in the front lines of the infantry and cavalry there appeared a number of officers with a higher military education, able to spread their knowledge among their comrades. In conformity with these foundations a new status of the Imperial Nicholas Military Academy was called into existence. With a view also

to preparing some officers, specialists in various arms, laws were elaborated for some special schools for officers, which, although not figuring among the higher colleges, are nevertheless intended to complete the knowledge of the officers. Thus a new status was adopted for the artillery, railway, electro-technical, and rifle schools. Projects were also elaborated with regard to the reorganisation of the courses received by officers for the purpose of educational activity : a gymnastic-fencing school, an aeronautic school for officers, with a branch for aviators at Sebastopol, and a company of automobilists were established. All these military institutions are now very successfully preparing officers for the corresponding and respective services.

CHAPTER XI

LESSONS OF THE JAPANESE WAR

THE Japanese war taught Russia much. It showed her the numerous defects of her military system, opened to her new horizons, and induced her to work out the reorganisation of her army and its activity.

For the purpose of better preparing the Russian army for the coming wars special commissions were appointed with a view to examining and working out all the laws and codes, regulations and instructions. These commissions, having examined all existing codes at home and abroad, including the regulations of the Japanese, started upon the elaboration of all the material at their disposal. The result of this work has been an edition of new laws, instructions, and precepts, regulating the teaching of the army.

The present war will enable Russia to estimate at its proper value the usefulness of this work. At present we still lack the necessary data enabling us to express a definite opinion on this subject, but we may add that everything that has been

instituted to guide and direct the Russian army represents the last word in military knowledge, and, in any case, is more rational and useful than what was in force during the Japanese war. Without enumerating all the new laws, we shall only say that their number amounts to forty-five. We can thus draw the conclusion that a great deal has been done in recent years for the instruction of the Tsar's army.

A substantial reform was introduced with regard to the question of keeping up the morality of the army. Its essence consists in the fact that the military gaols, which are now under the control of the chief military juridical court, are not only correctional institutions, but also serve as establishments where the inmates are taught to work, compulsory labour having been introduced, and the prisoners are taught various handicrafts. The time passed by the prisoners in the military gaols is deducted from their general term of service, and they are obliged to serve afterwards in the regiment the time they have passed in gaol. Formerly the serving of a sentence by order of a military court was not deducted, and it consequently often happened that some men, in a month or so after they had joined the regiment, were sent to a disciplinary battalion,

where they passed all their time, rendering absolutely no service in the army—but being, on the contrary, a burden upon it and upon the Imperial Budget.

As the most happy reform of the last years, one may consider the prohibition of alcoholic drinks in the army. The military authorities, demanding from officers and men alike a serious and difficult work, did also their best to improve their lives. The chief measures in this respect were directed towards the augmentation of their keep whilst in service and their pensions when they retire.

As fundamental principle in this direction was adopted the conception that the salary received for military service did not constitute payment but a means enabling those who served to fulfil their duty. In view, however, of the expensiveness of life, the military authorities were obliged to devise means enabling all the serving men, as far as possible, to live free from care and worry as to their daily bread in the present and in their old age, so that they could entirely and wholeheartedly devote their energy to the military service. For that purpose measures were adopted with a view to augmenting the salaries of the officers and the pensions received by them when retiring, and by their

families in case of the officers' or men's death.

These reforms chiefly concerned the officers. With regard to the lower ranks (subalterns) only the salaries received by those regiments stationed in the Irkutsk and Perma military districts were increased, and the pensions of the families of those who had fallen in war were augmented.

This increase of salary and pensions could not but produce a beneficial effect upon the qualificative level of the officers' corps. This has already manifested itself. During the past few years men with a higher and university education, also specialists, began to enter the military service, a fact which has produced beneficial effects and has raised the intellectual level of the officers' corps.

We have already mentioned that in recent years the views with regard to the importance of fortresses have completely changed. In former times fortresses were looked upon as obstacles impeding for a considerable time the march of the enemy. Now, however, the fortresses have lost their importance, and the present war has corroborated this theory. Either the enemy can go round the fortress, as has been done by the German army in France,

or the fortress falls, unable to withstand the fire of the heavy artillery and of the siege guns. In the present war Yaroslav, Lemberg (Lvov), Namur, and Antwerp are examples of this fact.

In consideration of such a change of views regarding fortresses, very important reforms were introduced to the frontier districts, and defensive measures were adopted. How far these alterations will prove useful the present war will soon show, as events are proceeding rapidly and are approaching the Russian fortresses on the western front. The fortress of Ossovetz has already stood the test. We can thus confidently affirm that the reforms carried out with regard to the defensive measures are in absolute conformity with the requirements of modern military science.

With this we shall conclude the short sketch and description of all that has been done by the War Ministry during the past few years. We cannot help pointing out that if many of these reforms did not hitherto produce any palpable result, this was due to the fact that the reforms only concerned such moments in the life of the Empire as when the enemy invaded the territory, and that such a moment has only just arrived, with the beginning of this war. With regard to the other re-

forms mentioned above, we shall make one general deduction and say that all these measures were absolutely in conformity with their purpose and dictated by the requirements of the moment.

The battles in Galicia and at Avgoustovo have proved that since the days of the Japanese war the Russian army, in consequence of alterations and reforms, has been absolutely rejuvenated.

In friendly France a definite opinion had been formed long before the outbreak of the war. It has been expressed in the following lines from the pen of one of the most prominent military writers:

"The reorganisation of the Russian army is the work of a man whose name Frenchmen ought to remember; it is that of the War Minister, General Soukhomlinov. This reorganisation of the army is a gigantic labour, spreading over all domains, from the questions relating to the high commandership and war tactics down to those concerning equipment, armament, and mobilisation. This labour is the more valuable as there are few countries like Russia, where stagnation, laziness, traditional inertia, and bribery, together with the enormous distances and severe climate, could place such obstacles in the way of progress. It is interesting to observe that with V. A.

Soukhomlinov words and deeds are at one. All the ideas which he expressed as an author he endeavoured to realise in his capacity of War Minister. Everything that he asks, in his literary productions, from those who occupy a responsible post, Vladimir Alexandrovitsh persistently carries out himself. Power did not change him, and he has remained the same as he was before."

CHAPTER XII

THE FAITH OF THE NATION

HAVING terminated our sketch, and returning now to the present war, we shall first point out that Russia in no way wished for a war and did not bring it about. The Government had exhausted all possible means to maintain peace. Germany was convinced that Russia was not at all ready, whilst she had already worked out a careful plan for a lightning-bearing war. The German Government decided to declare war. In reply to the sudden German mobilisation, it was not at all easy for Russia to collect her armies. And yet, in spite of the enormous distances and the lack of railways, the mobilisation in Russia took place with wonderful quickness and in perfect order. The exceptionally brilliant and quiet execution of the mobilisation has shown and proved clearly that the War Ministry was ready in every respect for the war. All the hitherto invisible work of the War Ministry became now clear. As soon, again, as it became known that the Grand Duke

Nicholas Nicholaevitsh had been appointed Commander-in-Chief of the active army, everybody felt convinced of success and had faith in the power and strength of the troops.

The Grand Duke is a man of iron will, by his birth absolutely independent of anybody, a warrior by nature, a man of colossal scale and terrible attack, whom even defeats do not frighten, going directly and promptly towards his goal. He must be acknowledged—we say it without any partiality—as the sole man who is able to occupy with honour and glory the post of Commander-in-Chief of the great Russian army. However Russian life may be constituted, it must be admitted that a great country and a great nation will always produce, whenever a great historical moment arrives, men predestined by Providence for a great historical task. The faith and confidence in the Commander-in-Chief which is hypnotising the Russian army is the best sign of its strength.

As a Russian V. A. Soukhomlinov was the first to understand and appreciate this fact.

And what a great calmness, what endless simplicity, what deep sincerity and faith may everywhere be noticed in this war with the Germans! The stories of

the men and officers who return from the battlefield are all strikingly alike; they all tell of the same disposition, of a complete faith, an absolute lack of bravado, boasting, and presumption.

It is very characteristic that first of all the officers, to a man, praise the Russian soldier, his wonderful firmness, his striking power of endurance, and his deep affection for his officers.

All those who have taken part in the war, who have been at the front, unanimously admit that the Russian army is magnificently prepared, and all ascribe this readiness to the fact that the Japanese war had ended disastrously for Russia. And yet an outsider must see in this readiness of the army the best testimony to the ability of the War Minister. Unanimously all are praising especially the Russian artillery. We must also draw attention to the success achieved by the cavalry, which, both in general and reconnoitring services, deserves the highest praise. In the present war the Russian cavalry bears with honour its special designation. All have also absolute faith in the commanding organisation.

It is also very significant that in the present war people are not complaining against each other. All are firmly and steadily working conscientiously for

country and nation, and every one is heroically doing his duty at his respective post.

Another thing—no one seems to be afraid of death. We hear no stories of fear and terror. War is war—and duty is duty. There is no time for reasoning. When we hear about the war at a distance we receive the impression of a great duel between two armies which will decide the fate of Germany and Russia.

It is also characteristic that the military rarely speak about the German atrocities; they look upon the Germans as upon a serious foe, only crushed by an exceptional technicality. In the end, however, say the officers, man conquers, not technics. And all are convinced of the complete victory of Russia over Germany.

In every great work, in the monotonous everyday labour, men remain invisible. So it also happens in the preparation of our army. But it would not be fair if I were not to mention the actual, official assistant and helper of the War Minister during the few years which preceded the war with Germany. This assistant was the engineer, General Alexander Petrovitsh Bernander. A modest man, full of knowledge and a wide experience, Bernander bore the heavy burden of the

invisible work in preparing the army, a work thrust upon his shoulders as assistant of the War Minister.

Frankly speaking, no one expected that a European war such as we are at present witnessing would break out in 1914. It is evident that the unlucky Count Pourtales, former German Ambassador at the Russian Court, and Herr Bethmann-Hollweg, the wooden and obedient Chancellor, and the shallow-brained Crown Prince, and even the theatrical Emperor himself, William II, never guessed, or thought, or imagined that they would meet the grey Russian army, great in its modesty and well prepared for the war, not worse, if not better, than the noisy great German army.

It is not in vain that on October 27 (new style), at a splendid banquet in London, presided over by the new Lord Mayor, and at which over 900 guests were present, among them the representatives of the highest political, diplomatic, and financial circles, the ex-leader of the English Opposition, Mr. Balfour, expressed himself as follows:

"The present war has not only manifested the military genius of the Russian army but also that of the Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholaevitsh. We may now hope to witness success following success, and victories carried off by the Russian

army upon the eastern theatre of war."

Thus Mr. Balfour concluded his praise of the Russian army. These remarks are the more valuable for the Russian army and the Russian War Minister as they emanate from a great political worker, representing in his figure the collective greatness of the English Imperial wisdom, knowledge, experience, and traditions. The solemn declaration of Mr. Balfour, a declaration made in such an exclusive gathering, in the presence of brilliant talents, representing the genius of the world power of England, will fill with pride both Russia and the Russian War Minister.

Not the least part of the opinion of Mr. Balfour, who has given an account of Russia's influence upon the war, was discounted in Germany when they considered the value of all the possible factors of the present European war. This was a mistake the consequence of which will be the bringing to naught of Germany's military strength. For it was Mr. Asquith, the English Premier, who spoke at that banquet immediately after Mr. Balfour. Mr. Asquith finished his speech with the following words:

"We shall not sheathe our sword until Belgium has received more than she has

sacrificed, until France is safe from menace, until the rights of the smaller nationalities have been placed upon a firm and stable foundation, and until the military hegemony of Germany has been definitely crushed."

This solemn declaration was made by no less a personage than the English Prime Minister, speaking in the name of his country.

The German politicians never for a moment thought of taking into account the facts which Mr. Asquith has so clearly and definitely expressed. This was Germany's second mistake, a mistake which will annihilate her political significance as a world-power.

After all that has happened we must be grateful to Providence that an end will come to the German Empire, and that new possibilities and horizons will be opened for Russia, predestined for her by the world's history.

The European war of 1914 will create new conditions in the life of nations. This unheard-of great war between civilised nations at the beginning of the twentieth century is also the beginning of a new epoch in the life of the world. And at the very dawn of this new life Great Russia is covering herself with the immortal glory of her popular and mili-

tary strength. And this great war of Russia will always be coupled with the name of Russia's War Minister, Adjutant-General Vladimir Alexandrovitsh Soukhomlinov.

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